

DECISION 11/2016/GB

OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE EUROPEAN POLICE COLLEGE

ADOPTING THE FIVE-YEAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION

OF THE EUROPEAN POLICE COLLEGE

Adopted by the Governing Board

on 24 May 2016

THE CEPOL GOVERNING BOARD,

Having regard to Council Decision 2005/681/JHA of 20 September 2005 establishing the European Police College (CEPOL)¹, and in particular Articles 21 thereof;

Whereas:

(1) Within five years after this Decision takes effect, and every five years thereafter, the Governing Board shall commission an independent external evaluation of the implementation of this Decision as well as of the activities carried out by CEPOL.

(2) Each evaluation shall assess the impact of this Decision and the utility, relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of CEPOL and its working practices.

(3) The Governing Board shall receive the evaluation and issue recommendations regarding CEPOL's structure and its working practices to the Commission. Both the evaluation findings and recommendations shall be part of the five- year report, to be established in accordance with the procedure provided for in Article 10(9)(e).

CEPOL has fulfilled the requirement of commissioning an independent external evaluation and has issued recommendations regarding CEPOL's structure and its working practices.

HAS ADOPTED the CEPOL five year report and is ready to submit it to the European Commission and the Council

Done at The Hague, 24 May 2016

For the Governing Board

<Signature on file>

*Mrs. Frederike Everts MPA
Chair of the Governing Board*

ANNEX I: Recommendations and Observations by the Governing Board

ANNEX II: The Five Year External Evaluation of CEPOL

¹ OJ L 256, 1.10.2005, p. 63. Decision as amended by Regulation (EU) No 543/2014 (OJ L 163, 29.5.2014, p. 5).



Five-Year Evaluation Report of the European Police College

Recommendations by the Governing Board

Table of Contents

Observations and Recommendations by the Governing Board	2
Foreword	2
Area evaluated: Relevance.....	2
Area evaluated: Coherence and Complementarity of CEPOL	3
Area evaluated: Effectiveness and Impact of CEPOL and its Activities	4
Area evaluated: Efficiency	5
Area evaluated: Structure and Governance	6
Area evaluated: Communication activities	6
Areas of horizontal recommendations.....	7
Other remarks by the Governing Board	7

Observations and Recommendations by the Governing Board

Foreword

Article 21 of Council Decision 2005/681/JHA¹ of 20 September 2005, as amended, stipulates that every five years the Governing Board shall commission an independent external evaluation of the implementation of the above Decision as well as of the activities carried out by CEPOL. Each evaluation shall assess the impact of this Decision¹ and the utility, relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of CEPOL and working practices.

The external evaluation² analysed all areas required by the above provision in a thorough way with methodological tools such as, desk reviews, surveys, interviews, focus groups and a workshop. The evaluator's report also included a section where the overall conclusions and recommendations were presented.

The Governing Board established a Working Group to compile the five-year CEPOL evaluation³, with the aim to facilitate evolving strategy, multiannual programming and to propose recommendations.

The Governing Board concurs with the evaluator's report and main recommendations. Yet some of the conclusions could have been better substantiated and supported by more evidence.

The Governing Board reviewed the five-year evaluation for each of the areas covered and provides the following observations and recommendations.

Area evaluated: Relevance⁴

Observations

The assessment of CEPOL's relevance was positive as CEPOL was able to respond and adapt to emerging priority areas. However, due to dynamic changes in the security environment, CEPOL's mandate as defined by Decision 2005/681/JHA¹ became outdated. The CEPOL Regulation (EU) 2015/2219⁵ which will enter into force on 1 July 2016, will allow to adapt the strategic objectives and to improve even more the relevance of CEPOL's activities; amongst others, through the Strategic Training Needs Analysis (STNA) and the Training Needs Analysis (TNA).

¹ Council Decision 2005/681/JHA of 20 September 2005, establishing the European Police College (CEPOL) and repealing Decision 2000/820/JHA

² 'ICF International' is used interchangeably with 'the external evaluator' and/or 'the evaluator', commissioned by the Governing Board of CEPOL to conduct the evaluation. 'External evaluator's report' is the document produced by the externally contracted company.

³ Decision 9/2015/GB of The Governing Board of The European Police College Establishing a Working Group for preparing the recommendations and compiling the five-year CEPOL evaluation report.

⁴ This section (Relevance) assesses the extent to which CEPOL and its activities addressed the needs of stakeholders and beneficiaries throughout the evaluation period.

⁵ 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

The evaluator has noted minor discrepancies⁶ between the topic of certain training activities and the profile of the nominated participants. In this respect the Governing Board highlights that although participation is solely determined at national level, CEPOL should do the utmost in its capacity to improve relevance between training activities offered and the profile of candidates being put forward for attending them⁷.

Recommendations

1. The Agency and its Network should support the European Commission in the development of the methodology of the STNA, ensuring that the cooperation element is reflected to the EU Agencies and other training suppliers.
2. Following the STNA methodology, CEPOL shall apply the STNA by taking into account the EU security agenda and all relevant training suppliers.
3. CEPOL shall apply the TNAs to meet specific training needs, including third countries.
4. In the light of Regulation (EU) 2015/2219, CEPOL shall further develop a common quality framework (Q13)⁸ for law enforcement learning, including the European Police Exchange Programme (EPEP).

Area evaluated: Coherence and Complementarity of CEPOL⁹

Observations

The evaluator noted that the internal coherence of CEPOL training portfolio has improved since 2010. Better division and streamlining of the thematic areas covered has been achieved, the enhanced use of webinars and LMS¹⁰ for courses have particularly contributed to the creation of synergies between the different learning tools.

The evaluator has identified complementarity between CEPOL and nationally organised training and learning activities.

Given the coordinating role of CEPOL stipulated in Regulation (EU) 2015/2219, the Governing Board envisions CEPOL as the heart of law enforcement training and knowledge base.

The JHA Training Matrix¹¹ has been confirmed being a useful tool for structured exchange of information and coordinated planning in training and knowledge exchange, between the JHA Agencies. The Governing Board acknowledges this achievement and encourages to evolve the JHA Training Matrix into a dynamic tool for planning and coordinating training and learning activities.

⁶ Approx. 8% of participants for the specialised training courses analysed

⁷ See GB recommendation No 10, under area Effectiveness and Impact of CEPOL products and its Activities

⁸ 'Quality in Thirteen Questions (Q13)' is the common educational standards that have been endorsed by the CEPOL Governing Board

⁹ This section (Coherence and Complementarity) assesses the extent to which CEPOL activities are complementary (externally) to those of EU/international and national stakeholders and logical (internally)

¹⁰ Learning Management System

¹¹ The JHA Training Matrix is a tool which aims to enhance awareness and coordination between JHA agencies via a structured exchange of information and coordinated planning in training and knowledge exchange between JHA agencies.

The Governing Board considers that with respect to ‘Coherence and Complementarity’ CEPOL is moving in the right direction; in the meantime, greater synergies could be achieved. The creation and functioning of the Centres of Excellence (CoE) could offer a unique opportunity to this end¹².

Recommendations

Coherence with other EU-level activities

5. In order to ensure greater synergies and coherence among the EU training suppliers, the JHA Training Matrix should be utilised as a coordinated planning tool.

Complementarity with the Member States

6. CEPOL should continue to ensure complementarity between the training provided at national and at Union level.
7. Based on the STNA and the TNAs, CEPOL should continue providing blended learning based on cutting-edge technologies, to ensure the EU level added value.

Area evaluated: Effectiveness and Impact of CEPOL and its Activities¹³

Observations

The Governing Board agrees with the external evaluator that the Agency has achieved its goals and strategic objectives for the period 2011-2015. Despite the fact that the budget was not substantially increased, CEPOL’s activities demonstrated a significant growth in participation.

In line with the evaluator’s opinion, the Governing Board acknowledges high participant satisfaction regarding the quality of CEPOL training.

Following the 2012 Discharge Decision of the European Parliament¹⁴, the results and impact CEPOL’s work has on European citizens, shall be communicated in an accessible way, mainly through the website. To fulfil this request, the annual reports, work programmes, training catalogues, five-year evaluation reports and other relevant documents are published on the CEPOL website.

The Governing Board recognises the importance of evaluating the impact of CEPOL and its activities at national level by continuing to conduct post-course evaluations and stakeholder engagement surveys.

The Governing Board shares the apprehension of the evaluator regarding the use and effectiveness of Common Curricula (CC) developed by CEPOL.

Recommendations

CEPOL should:

¹² See recommendation No 15

¹³ This section (Effectiveness and Impact) assesses the extent to which CEPOL has been effective in implementing its activities and reaching its objectives

¹⁴ P7_TA-PROV(2014)0304

8. Offer platforms for the exchange of good practices in order to support the national coordination mechanism.
9. Identify and share good practices of cascading mechanisms for knowledge gained at CEPOL activities.
10. Improve the description of participant profiles¹⁵ in order to enhance the relevance of candidates for CEPOL's learning and training activities.
11. Continue post-course evaluations to monitor the cascading of skills, knowledge and experience at national level.
12. Revise the concept of Common Curricula.

Area evaluated: Efficiency¹⁶

Observations

The external evaluator has assessed the Agency as being efficient. This conclusion is supported by evidence of an increased number of activities implemented by CEPOL over the evaluation period against a relatively stable number of resources put at its disposal.

The Governing Board agrees with the evaluator's observation concerning the necessity of additional human resources to CEPOL, in the light of the mandate defined in Regulation (EU) 2015/2219.

The system of grant agreements is considered to have led to greater efficiency. However, stakeholders are still calling for reduction of the administrative workload. The Governing Board takes note of this remark yet highlights the necessity for CEPOL to comply with the provisions of the EU financial regulations.

At the same time the Governing Board is of the opinion that the formation of consortia, underpinning the functioning of Centres of Excellence, will result in efficiency gains through the streamlining, the simplification, the decrease in bureaucracy and the efficiency of grants management¹⁷.

¹⁵ Regulation (EC) 2015/2219, "from police officers to border guards and customs officers, as well as, where appropriate, other state officials, such as prosecutors"

¹⁶ This section (Efficiency) assesses the extent to which CEPOL has been delivering its activities and reaching its objectives efficiently

¹⁷ In response to the call from the European Council in the Stockholm Programme to step up training on Union related issues and to make such training systematically accessible to law enforcement officials of all ranks, and to the request from the European Parliament for a stronger Union framework for judicial and police training, the objectives of CEPOL should, while putting particular emphasis on the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the context of law enforcement, be structured in line with the following set of general principles: first, to support Member States in providing training in order to improve basic knowledge of the Union dimension of law enforcement; second, to support Member States, upon their request, in the development of bilateral and regional cooperation through law enforcement training; third, to develop, implement and coordinate training in specific thematic areas; and fourth, to develop, implement and coordinate training in relation to Union missions and law enforcement capacity-building activities in third countries. That set of general principles should represent the European Law Enforcement Training Scheme (LETS), which aims to ensure that Union level training for law enforcement officials is of a high quality, coherent and consistent. Those general principles reflect the four strands identified by the Commission on the basis of the mapping of training needs and delivery conducted by CEPOL in cooperation with Member States.

Recommendations

13. It is recommended for CEPOL to elaborate the business case for at least 12 additional FTEs¹⁸, to allow the Agency to fulfil its new tasks defined in Regulation (EU) 2015/2219.
14. CEPOL should seek to ensure sufficient EU funding to be able to meet the legitimate expectations of its expanded target audience.
15. It is recommended for CEPOL to elaborate, in close collaboration with its Network, the concept of the Centres of Excellence (definitions, criteria, standards, aims, etc.).
16. CEPOL should explore the use of multiannual direct awards to consortia of implementing partners to encourage pooling of resources, contributing to efficiency gains and reducing bureaucracy.

Area evaluated: Structure and Governance¹⁹

Observations

The evaluator's conclusions under this section were, in their largest part, pivoted around the role, the responsibilities and the structure of NCPs at national level. As a result no recommendations are formulated in this area.

The Governing Board acknowledges the fact that the organisational setup of NCPs at national level falls within the remit of the individual Member State. Consequently any issues stemming from the current *modus operandi* should be addressed at national level²⁰.

The evaluator also touches upon the topic of the relocation of CEPOL to conclude that it did not have any serious impact on business continuity. The Governing Board welcomes this conclusion, yet does not neglect the negative impact the relocation had on human aspects. The Governing Board is of the opinion that the relocation and its impact should have been better addressed under the heading 'Efficiency'.

Area evaluated: Communication activities²¹

Observations

The evaluator concluded that overall the communication activities of CEPOL were effective. It did, however, identify some shortcomings in respect to the monitoring of implementation of the 2012 Communication Strategy and for measuring the effectiveness of CEPOL's communication activities.

Although the Governing Board supports the transparency with respect to the implementation of the communication strategy, it considers though that measuring the effectiveness of

¹⁸ Full Time Equivalent

¹⁹ In this section (Structure and Governance) the evaluator has presented the changes in the structure and governance of CEPOL and has assessed the extent to which they contributed to the effective delivery of activities and to improving the efficiency of the Agency

²⁰ Regulation (EU) 2015/2219, Art. 6

²¹ This section (Communication) assesses the extent to which CEPOL's communication activities were relevant to the target audience, were effectively and efficiently implemented and managed to increase the visibility of the Agency

CEPOL's communication activities should not be a priority in the current context of limited resources.

The Governing Board acknowledges that there will be an increased demand for communication activities, due to new audiences and the request from the Discharge Authority to communicate the results and the impact of CEPOL's work²².

Recommendation

17. CEPOL should develop a new communication strategy in order to support the implementation of Regulation (EU) 2015/2219 and ensure transparency.

Areas of horizontal recommendations

Observation

The external evaluation called for an improvement to CEPOL's monitoring system with regard to the learning activities. In that respect the Governing Board stresses that consistency in reporting for the evaluation period has already improved. In addition, the adoption of new templates and reporting tools, such as the Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) and the Single Programming Document (SPD), contributes to those areas.

Other remarks by the Governing Board

The evaluator has reported that stopping or withdrawing CEPOL activities would weaken European police cooperation, inevitably undermining the joint European police philosophy and culture.

The Governing Board notices that although the added value of CEPOL has been evaluated²³, it has been omitted in the evaluator's Conclusions and Recommendations.

²² P7_TA-PROV (2014) 0304, European Parliament 2012 Discharge.

²³ ICF International, Five-Year External Evaluation of CEPOL, Contract Notice reference no. 2014/S 239-419988 – Final Report, 20 November 2015: Section 2.6 The EU added value of CEPOL (p.73)



Five-Year External Evaluation of CEPOL

Contract Notice reference no. 2014/S 239-419988

Final Report

20 November 2015



Contents

Contents.....	3
1 Introduction	4
1.1 Purpose of the study	4
1.2 Methodology.....	4
1.3 Main obstacles encountered and countermeasures taken	7
1.4 Structure of the report	7
2 Evaluation findings	8
2.1 Sources of information	8
2.2 The relevance of CEPOL and its activities.....	8
2.3 The coherence and complementarity of CEPOL	22
2.4 The effectiveness and impact of CEPOL and its activities	32
2.5 The efficiency of CEPOL.....	62
2.6 The EU added value of CEPOL	73
2.7 Assessment of the structure and governance of CEPOL	74
2.8 Assessment of communication activities	82
3 Conclusions and recommendations	91
3.1 Relevance	91
3.2 Coherence and complementarity of CEPOL.....	92
3.3 Effectiveness and impact of CEPOL and its activities	93
3.4 Efficiency	94
3.5 The structure and governance of CEPOL.....	95
3.6 Communication activities	96
3.7 Horizontal recommendations	97

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the study

This evaluation is to provide the CEPOL Governing Board (GB) with an independent external evaluation of the Agency. It aims to assess the implementation of Council Decision 2005/681/JHA establishing CEPOL, as well as the activities carried out by the Agency.

This evaluation provides the GB with conclusions on the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, coherence, impact, utility and added value of the Agency. Moreover, a comprehensive set of recommendations is also put forward by this study. It will support CEPOL in improving its current functioning and organisation.

The evaluation covers the period 2011–2015. It evaluates CEPOL with regards to the tasks laid down in Council Decision 2005/681/JHA of 20 September 2005. Furthermore, the study assesses and evaluates three specific themes, namely:

- CEPOL's learning and training activities;
- The European Police Exchange Programme (EPEP); and
- The structure and governance of CEPOL.

Additionally, the evaluation focuses on assessing CEPOL's internal communication (between Member States, between Member States and the Agency and within Member States) as well as its external communication with stakeholders.

As part of the evaluation, the following was taken into account:

- **Recent organisational changes and new activities** – changes were introduced, for example, to the structure of the Agency in October 2014. The evaluation considers the impact of such changes on the effectiveness and efficiency of CEPOL;
- **Changes introduced to address previous evaluations** – the study also considers the changes introduced (in the period 2011–2015) to address the weaknesses identified both by the previous five-year evaluation as well as the study on the amendment of Council Decision 2005/681/JHA setting up CEPOL activity (carried out in 2012);
- **Future legislative changes** – Regulation (EU) No 543/2014 states that a legislative proposal to amend the CEPOL Decision should be put forward at the end of 2015, following a thorough cost-benefit analysis and impact assessment. The present evaluation considers the extent to which the anticipated changes in the mandate and governance of CEPOL will impact (positively or negatively) on the shortcomings identified;
- **The general EU political agenda with regard to EU Agencies** – the study also considers the EU strategy as expressed in the Joint Statement and the Common Approach of the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission on Decentralised Agencies adopted on 19 July 2012 and the European Commission Roadmap on the follow-up of the Common Approach adopted on 19 December 2012;
- **Relevant policy developments** – together with the new Commission, new policy priorities and EU actions emerged, which could have an impact on CEPOL in terms of its activities. Possible examples include a higher level of attention on the issue of smuggling, also as a cross-border organised crime, the increased focus on Europe 2020 and potential new measures in the field of internal security. The evaluation examines CEPOL's relevance and capacity to adapt to such new developments.

1.2 Methodology

The following methodological tools were used in this study:

- A review of evidence, literature and other documentation
- Exploratory interviews
- Surveys
- Interviews
- Focus groups
- A workshop.

Review of evidence, literature and other documentation

A review of information provided by CEPOL, and publicly available information, was undertaken. The study team carefully reviewed the following documents:

- Documents providing factual information on the functioning of CEPOL – Council Decision 2005/681/JHA, a proposal for a regulation establishing a European Union agency for law enforcement training, CEPOL's Annual Work Programmes, CEPOL's annual budgets, CEPOL's Multi-Annual Plans, GB decisions, calls for grant applications and grant agreements, etc.;
- Documents providing information on CEPOL's activities – CEPOL's Annual Reports, list of activities organised each year, training catalogue, course/seminar and exchange programme reports, etc.;
- Documents providing evaluative information – The evaluation of the EU decentralised agencies, the five-year report of the European Police College, the study on the amendment of Council Decision 2005/681/JHA setting up CEPOL activity, course/seminar evaluations, post-course/seminar evaluations, exchange programme feedback summary report, exchange programme final reports, key performance and performance indicators, etc.;
- Documents providing contextual information – 2015 the European Agenda on Security, 2013 Communication Establishing a European Law Enforcement Training Scheme, etc.;
- Documents providing information about CEPOL's relations with partners – Memoranda of understanding and cooperation agreements between CEPOL and other EU and international agencies and bodies, Scorecards – Implementation of the JHA Agencies report, 2014 JHA Training Matrix report, etc.

Both qualitative and quantitative information was reviewed; these, together with the results of the consultation, informed the evaluation findings.

Exploratory interviews

Scoping interviews were organised with the aim of providing the study team with general information relevant to the assignment. In total, the study team undertook seven interviews (six GB members and one representative of Director General (DG) Home and Migration Affairs were interviewed).

Surveys

Four online surveys were launched at the beginning of July. They were sent to:

- All the national contact points (NCPs);
- All the national police colleges/ framework partners (NPC/FP);
- Participants attending CEPOL learning and training activities and the EPEP; and
- Line managers (LM).

For data protection reasons, CEPOL facilitated the dissemination of the online surveys.

During the evaluation process, the following responses were received:

- NCP – 25
- NPC/FP – 11
- Participants – 197, and

- LM – 38.

The results of the surveys are presented in this report as well as in the Annex.

Interviews

The stakeholder consultation started at the beginning of July. The following interviews were undertaken by the study team:

- 8 with GB Members
- 3 with CEPOL staff
- 4 with EU and international agencies.

Ten written replies were submitted by GB members.

Focus groups

As part of this evaluation, three focus groups were organised (on 14, 15 and 16 October 2015), focusing on the following topics:

- CEPOL learning and training activities;
- The EPEP; and
- The structure and governance of CEPOL.

The aim of the focus groups was to obtain participants' opinions on the possible shortcomings, issues and obstacles encountered as well as to explore possible future actions to address these.

Each focus group involved a variety of stakeholders (CEPOL central actors, NCPs and coordinators). This ensured that all the assumptions were validated from different perspectives, thus guaranteeing solid results.

The focus groups were organised virtually using *Skype for Business*. Group interaction was facilitated by the ICF team who presented the topics or questions for discussion and moderated the debates. Following a short introduction of the “statements” (draft findings) identified by the study team, the participants were invited to vote (using the polling function provided by Skype for Business) on whether they agreed or disagreed with the sentence presented. The results of the poll were shown to the participants, who were asked to comment on the reasons underpinning their vote. Success factors, obstacles and preconditions to proposed actions were also explored with the participants.

Workshop

A final workshop was organised on 28 October 2015. This was attended by five CEPOL representatives, one GB member, one Commission representative as well as the ICF study team together with their external expert, Willy Bruggeman. The aim of the workshop was to discuss and validate the conclusions and draft the recommendations of the evaluation. More specifically, the following were discussed, for each recommendation:

- Further defining elements with regard to the practical implementation of the recommendation (responsibilities, actors involved, time frame, exceptions, etc.);
- The advantages and disadvantages of each recommendation;
- The intended and unintended consequences;
- The main conditions for successful implementation;
- Possible feasibility limitations.

Following the meeting, the study team further elaborated the conclusions and recommendations, based on the discussions held.

1.3 Main obstacles encountered and countermeasures taken

Overall, no major obstacles were encountered during the evaluation. The table below however provides information with regard to some (minor) obstacles encountered and the countermeasures taken.

Table 1.1 Obstacles encountered and countermeasures taken

Obstacle	Countermeasures
Inconsistencies in reporting with regard to the number of activities organised annually and the number of participants attending such activities, particularly when comparing the figures presented in different reports (e.g. Annual Reports or Annual Activity Reports)	For most of the assessment with regard to the number of activities and participants, ICF referred to a single source of information in order to provide consistency in the analysis. For example, with regard to the CEPOL Annual Reports, ICF made use of the “training catalogues”, which are included in each report, manually counting activities (by type) and number of participants for the whole reference period.
Scarce information with regard to the nationality and profile of participants in training and learning activities	While the study team could not “weight” the reach of CEPOL on the police population of each Member State, some considerations were included in terms of total reach of CEPOL activities as well as with regard to the number of activities organised by each country in comparison to the size of the country (see section 2.4 below).
Some of the findings identified were based on the opinions provided by a few stakeholders consulted	The study team validated those findings through the organisation of three focus groups. Some of the findings were clarified with information coming from a different perspective. This allowed the study team to triangulate evidence.
Limited diversity of participants in the focus group on the governance and structure of CEPOL	While the focus group was only attended by representatives of the Agency, the views of national stakeholders were extensively collected through other data collection tools such as interviews and surveys.

1.4 Structure of the report

The Final Report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 presents the evaluation findings;
- Section 3 presents the overall conclusions and recommendations.

Additional graphs are presented in the Annex.

2 Evaluation findings

This section of the report provides an initial analysis of the current functioning of CEPOL with regard to the following aspects:

- The relevance of CEPOL and its activities;
- The coherence and complementarity of CEPOL with similar interventions at EU and national level, as well as the internal complementarity of the Agency;
- The effectiveness of CEPOL and its activities;
- The efficiency of CEPOL;
- The impact of CEPOL and its activities; and
- The EU added value of CEPOL.

2.1 Sources of information

The evaluation draws on qualitative and quantitative data collected for this study. In addition, in line with the original approach of the proposal, the evaluation draws on the five-year evaluation which was published in 2010, the study on the amendments of Council Decision 2005/681/JHA setting up CEPOL undertaken by ICF (hereafter the 2012 study) as well as survey data from CEPOL training and other existing survey data. The purpose of the primary data collection undertaken for this study has been to complement the existing data and, where appropriate, to update it by identifying progress and improvements since the publication of the five-year evaluation and its recommendations.

2.2 The relevance of CEPOL and its activities

This section assesses the extent to which CEPOL and its activities addressed the needs of stakeholders and beneficiaries throughout the evaluation period.

2.2.1 The evolution of CEPOL's mandate and role

How has CEPOL's mandate and role evolved in the five years covered by the evaluation? Was this evolution in line with recent policy developments (related to security, e.g. the Internal Security Strategy, the European Agenda on Security, etc.) and related to training (e.g. the European Training Scheme, etc.)?

With regard to the evolution of CEPOL's role, there have been some notable developments which have ultimately resulted in the currently negotiated *Regulation 2014/465 establishing a European Union agency for law enforcement training (CEPOL), repealing and replacing the Council Decision 2005/681/JHA*.

On 27 March 2013 the Commission made a proposal for a regulation updating the legal framework of the European Police Office (Europol). With regard to CEPOL and the training of police forces, the proposal pursued three aims. First, it suggested merging CEPOL with Europol to boost synergies between operational law enforcement work and training activities, and to make administrative savings. Second, it aimed to strengthen the new agency's ability to support law enforcement training in the EU by giving it the necessary powers to implement the European Law Enforcement Training Scheme (LETS). Third, it sought to align the rules on governance of the newly created entity with the Common Approach on EU decentralised agencies.

Following the proposal, the European Parliament and the Council did not agree to the proposed merger of CEPOL with Europol. Instead, a regulation (proposed by Member States pursuant to Article 76 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and based

on Article 87(2)(b) TFEU) moving the seat of CEPOL as an independent agency to Budapest, Hungary, was adopted on 6 May 2014¹.

With regard to the role and mandate of CEPOL, the 2012 study indicated the existence of a disconnect between the potential of the Agency to take responsibility for the recent EU policy developments, in particular the implementation of the LETS and the limitations set by the legal basis of CEPOL. More specifically, according to the study, CEPOL certainly had the potential to become a “centre of excellence”, taking on an advisory role in the development of EU policies on law enforcement training as well as coordinating training opportunities across the EU. However, its legal basis did not allow CEPOL to take responsibility for the EU’s upcoming training policy for law enforcement. The study called for broadening CEPOL’s mandate to allow the Agency to train all law enforcement officials (not only senior police officers) and to undertake tasks, which are presently not in CEPOL’s remit.

While CEPOL’s mandate has not changed since the 2012 study, in the last few years, it has been working towards a complete alignment with new policy developments and has thus been increasing its relevance. The importance of training and the role of CEPOL were mentioned in the recent European Agenda on Security. CEPOL is also regularly involved in the policy cycle. In particular, the Agency is involved in drafting the Operational Action Plan and its training component in close cooperation with the Members States and Europol.

Moreover, over the last five years, CEPOL’s role as a coordinator of law enforcement training has grown. The Commission has given increasing responsibility to the Agency for mapping the scale and scope of law enforcement training provision in the EU with a view to identifying gaps and potential overlaps (cf. CEPOL, 2013)². In 2014, such work culminated in the setting up, by CEPOL, of the justice and home affairs (JHA) Training Matrix (as further described in section 2.3.2).

CEPOL’s mandate is currently under revision³. The new regulation, which should enter into force by July 2016, confers on CEPOL the implementation of the LETS by conducting strategic training needs assessments and ensuring a common quality framework for law enforcement learning.

The new legal basis responds to the call included in the Stockholm Programme to step up training on EU-related issues and to make them systematically accessible for all relevant law enforcement professionals. It also takes into account the request of the European Parliament for a European training policy for police forces to address the increasingly complex and international nature of serious crime. The proposed regulation is in line with the priorities set out in the Internal Security Strategy in Action, with the Common Approach on EU decentralised agencies as well as the Communication of the Commission on “An open and secure Europe: making it happen”, which stressed the need to develop EU-level training of law enforcement personnel to support practical cooperation and full implementation of the LETS.

The new legal framework thus provides a solid ground for CEPOL to grow further as a provider of law enforcement training. The importance of training and of equipping police forces with the right skills to face the new challenges posed by transnational organised crime, will be further stressed by CEPOL at EU level. However, this is going to be a challenge for the future in the context of budget cuts as well the prioritisation of operational needs.

Looking to the future, the ambition is to further raise CEPOL’s profile in the European and global security training market. The Agency is currently strengthening its cooperation with

¹ Regulation (EU) No 543/2014 (link is external) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 amending Council Decision 2005/681/JHA establishing the European Police College (CEPOL)

² Annual Report 2011

³ Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a European Union agency for law enforcement training (CEPOL), repealing and replacing Council Decision 2005/681/JHA

strategic third countries/regions such as the Middle East and North African countries, the US and the Russian Federation (currently on hold) Eastern Europe and South East Europe.

2.2.2 The evolution of training needs across the EU

What was the evolution of training needs for law enforcement at national level over the last five years? What are the new priorities?

What contextual or policy developments (at EU and/or at national level) influenced the evolution of training needs?

Most of the stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation mentioned the emergence of some training needs at the national level over the past five years. The areas of crime most often mentioned were financial crimes (with particular attention on money laundering), terrorism, crime related to the use of ICT such as cybercrime, illegal immigration as well as trafficking activities (trafficking in human beings, drugs, illegal arms trafficking, counterfeiting of goods, etc.). The evolution of national training needs is strongly influenced by the occurrence of criminal incidents such as terrorist events (as recently witnessed by France, Egypt, Lebanon and Tunisia) or trends in particular crime areas (for example, the increasing smuggling of migrants and irregular migration flows, etc.).

Most GB members stated that national training priorities in their Member States broadly followed the strategic priorities and policies of the EU and the Europol threat assessment. However, national factors also influence the evolution of training needs, such as the introduction of policy and legal changes as well as institutional and social developments. Some national priorities mentioned include, for example, radicalisation in Belgium, hate crime in Slovakia and legal highs in Poland.

Some GB members interviewed also stated that police forces were always in need of training about EU policing tools and instruments for cross-border cooperation. A representative of Eurojust also mentioned that law enforcement authorities similarly need to become familiar with judicial cooperation tools.

With regard to the evolution of training needs, the EC Communication on the LETS⁴ states that “at national level, where most training of law enforcement officials continues to take place, specialised issues such as drug trafficking, cybercrime, financial crime and money laundering, cross-border organised crime investigations, and EU legal issues, are generally covered, and often implemented as part of bilateral cooperation between Member States. Still, consultations with experts point to a clear need for more training, with EU support, in these areas.” The Communication also mentions the importance for officers involved in cross-border cooperation to improve their knowledge and understanding of cross-border policing (e.g. on the EU policing context and on available tools on agencies such as Europol and Eurojust, or instruments for information exchange, such as the Prüm Decisions).

Finally, “horizontal” training needs such as leadership and language skills are also increasingly important for police forces (as shown by the 2014 CEPOL National Exchange Coordinators (NEC) survey).

Some training needs were also identified in CEPOL’s 2013 mapping⁵ with regard to LETS. The mapping indicated that, concerning the first strand (basic initial and promotion training), law enforcement authorities (LEA) identified some European contents or topics requiring further development. Initial training particularly is needed with regard to the *Schengen*

⁴ Brussels, 27.3.2013, COM(2013) 172 final, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Establishing a European Law Enforcement Training Scheme

⁵ European Training Scheme, Mapping of Law Enforcement Training in the European Union, FINAL REPORT prepared by CEPOL, 2013.

acquis, the functioning of Europol and on SIRENE. Training needs with regard to promotion are mainly linked to the functioning of joint investigation teams, the functioning of Europol and OLAF, the SIENA system and the European Arrest Warrant.

Concerning the second strand of the LETS (bilateral/regional training), a need for further training was identified particularly for the following topics:

- Cross-border Organised Criminal Activities – 28 LEA (54% of the respondents) from 16 Member States.
- Investigation Methodologies and Techniques – 23 LEA (44% of the respondents) from 16 Member States.
- Language Skills – 21 LEA (40% of the respondents) from 14 Member States.

With regard to the third strand (specialised training), mapping identified some areas where more training is needed. The main training needs relate to financial crime, (including money laundering), drug trafficking, leadership management as well as strategic and tactical analysis.

2.2.3 The extent to which training needs are covered by CEPOL

Are the training needs mentioned above covered by CEPOL activities?

Is CEPOL's system for identification of training needs comprehensive (in terms of actors involved, etc.)? Is it appropriate for the identification of the most pressing needs and for ensuring adjustment of the CEPOL annual programme to key political and/or contextual changes?

What are the areas for improvement? Are there any outstanding/unmet needs?

Are the objectives and tasks of CEPOL as stated in Articles 6 and 7 of the Council Decision 2005/681/JHA still relevant to law enforcement needs? To what extent are the objectives of CEPOL SMART?

According to the EC Communication on the LETS, there has already been considerable progress in implementing training on cross-border matters in the EU. However, “despite the efforts of national, EU and international actors and cooperation between them, there are still significant gaps between training needs and training currently available in the EU⁶.” Training should respond appropriately to training needs and more firmly support priorities such as fighting cybercrime and trafficking in drugs and in human beings, agreed at EU level for operational cooperation.

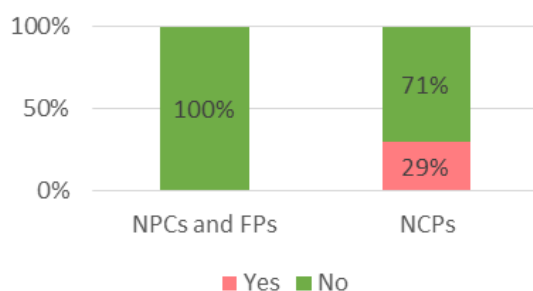
Are the training needs mentioned above covered by CEPOL activities?

Survey results and consultations undertaken for this assignment suggested that CEPOL, overall, is relevant to the training needs of the EU Member States in the field of law enforcement. Moreover, the Agency has managed to adapt well to changes to the recent operational environment, for example, by integrating topics that have recently emerged as priority areas (cybercrime, irregular migration, etc.).

The evidence gathered shows that, currently, law enforcement training needs are addressed to a great extent and that CEPOL is considered to have a prominent role in achieving this objective. The NPC and FP surveyed indicated that there were no outstanding/unmet needs that would not be covered by national and EU learning and training activities. The views of NCPs, however, were slightly more negative with 29% of NCP respondents indicating that there were still some outstanding/unmet needs (Figure 2.1 below).

⁶ European Training Scheme — Mapping of Law Enforcement Training in the EU, CEPOL 2012

Figure 2.1 Are there, in your view, some outstanding/unmet needs?



Source: NPCs and FPs survey, NCPs survey 2015; $N_{NPC/FP}=11$; $N_{NCP}=24$

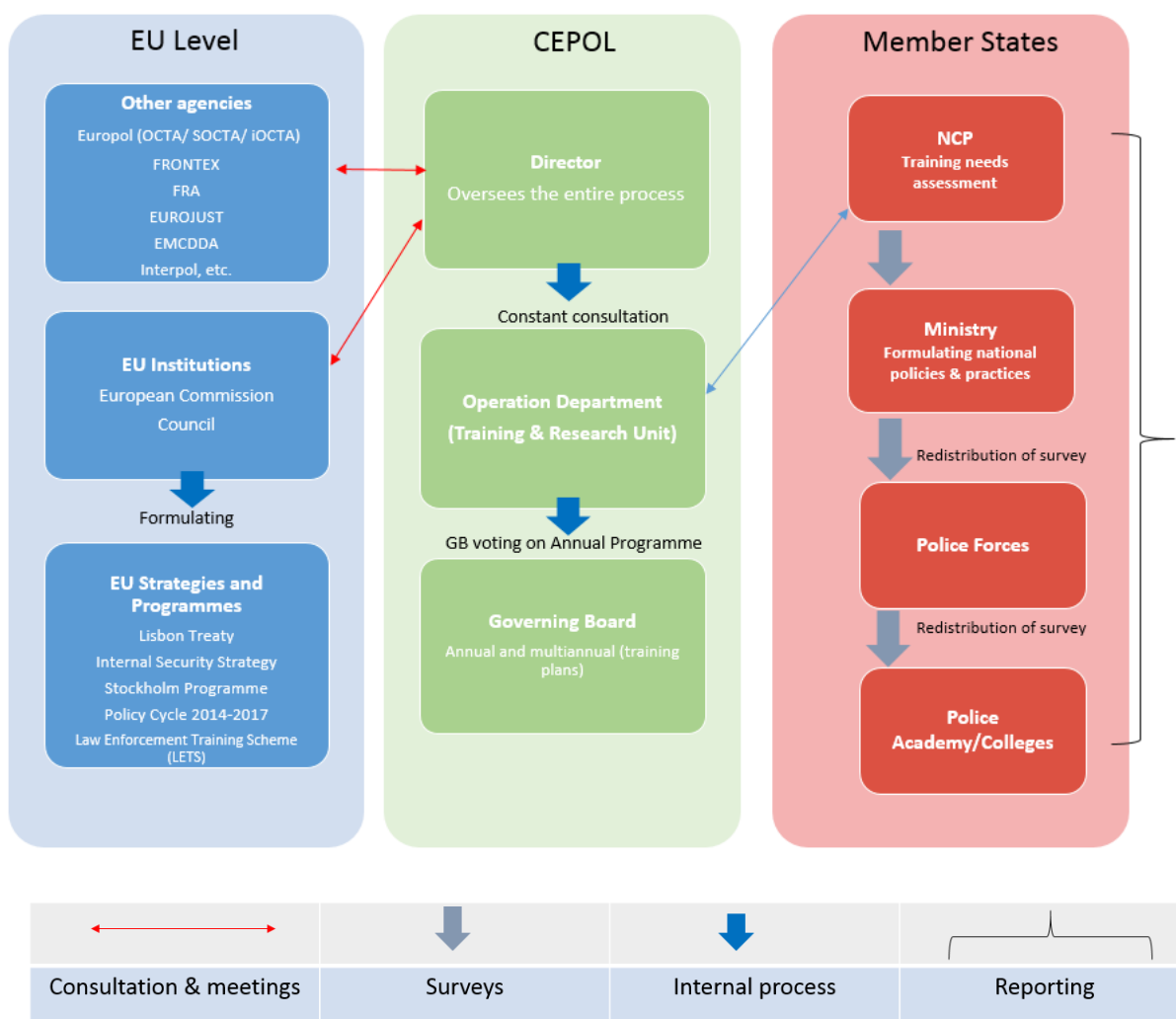
Is CEPOL's system for identification of training needs comprehensive (in terms of actors involved, etc.)? Is it appropriate for the identification of the most pressing needs and for ensuring adjustment of the CEPOL annual programme to key political and/or contextual change? What are the areas for improvement? Are there any outstanding/unmet needs?

Stakeholders agreed that the system put in place to identify training needs and compile the annual training catalogue enabled CEPOL to implement activities which were highly relevant to the national needs. As further explained below, the fact that national actors and EU-level stakeholders are involved in such a system was considered to be a strength as it allows for the direct communication of current national needs, which are subsequently reflected by the Agency's activities. At the same time, the evaluation also identified the need to ensure more consistency in the extent to which police forces are involved in the process of identifying needs. It appears that, currently, the approaches taken at national level vary across the EU. In this regard, it could be beneficial to develop (for example, in the context of the currently developed methodology for the strategic needs assessment) a common approach to consultation (describing, for example, the recommended tools and techniques, processes, outputs and outcomes). Such a methodology could be shared with the Member States who could then apply it (or part of it) and adapt it to their own national coordination system.

As illustrated in the figure below, CEPOL's system for the identification of training needs relies on the expertise of key players both at national and EU level, such as the Council of the EU, the European Commission, JHA agencies and Member States' representatives.

Each year, two consultations are held in parallel. In one, the CEPOL's director is involved in discussions with other EU agencies and institutions with regard to the EU policy cycle and identifying the most pressing EU priorities. In the other, CEPOL is involved in discussions with national authorities, mostly through the NCPs. The Member States are asked to reply to a written questionnaire, rating the priority training topics according to their national needs. The NCPs are responsible for collecting the answers and communicating the national results to CEPOL. Meetings between NCPs are held to discuss the results, and the final training catalogue is only compiled following a vote by the GB.

Figure 2.2 CEPOL's system for the identification of training needs



The majority of GB members interviewed (14 out of 24)⁷ considered that CEPOL's training needs in the last five years fully reflected both the EU's and Member States' needs. Three stakeholders in particular noted a positive development of CEPOL's training programmes in recent years. Interviewees particularly appreciated the greater involvement of all partners (national and other JHA agencies) in the continuous process of identification of training needs. Others noted a greater involvement of EU-level institutions in this process. In fact, prior to the evaluation period, the training catalogue was mainly elaborated by the Member States while in the last five years the European Commission has had a greater influence on the drafting of the CEPOL annual training catalogue.

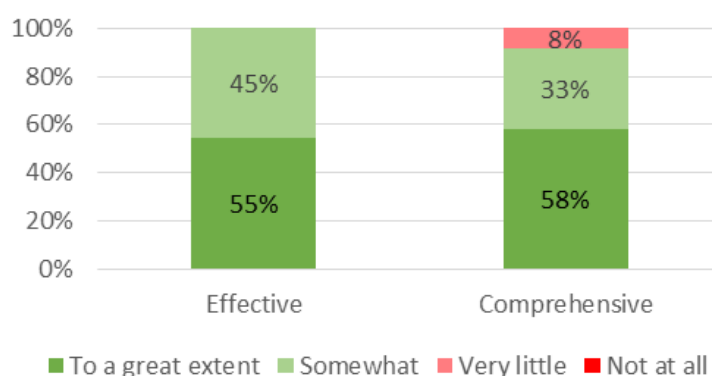
Despite this recent shift, the majority of interviewees indicated that the alignment of CEPOL's training programmes with EU and national priorities was achieved in an accurate and balanced manner. One of the interviewees estimated that half of CEPOL's activities responded directly to EU priorities and the remaining half were related to the Member States' needs. However, two interviewees also pointed out that too much attention was given to specific national training needs. One insisted on the need to focus more on common issues and transnational/international training needs, while the other mentioned the importance of regional interests (i.e. grouping neighbouring Member States). Finally, during the final workshop, participants also suggested that CEPOL's system for the identification of training

⁷ Six interviewees did not respond to the question

needs could increasingly focus on the external dimension of training (i.e. with regard to civilian missions and capacity building in third countries) in line with the fourth strand of the LETS.

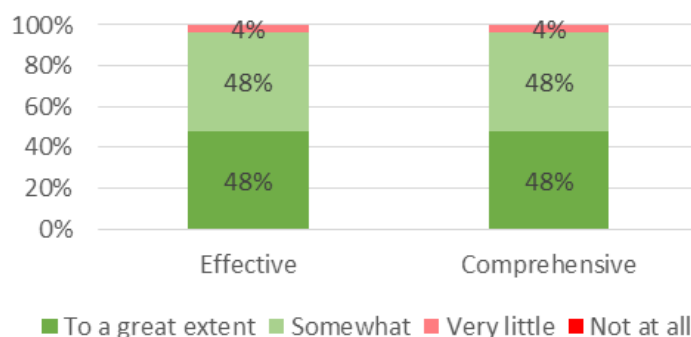
The majority of respondents to the NPCs and FPs survey agreed that CEPOL's system/process for the identification of training needs is effective and comprehensive (Figure 2.3). Similarly, the majority of NCPs agreed that the system is effective and comprehensive (Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.3 NPC and FP: To what extent is CEPOL's system/process for the identification of training needs effective and comprehensive?



Source: NPCs and FPs survey, 2015; N=12

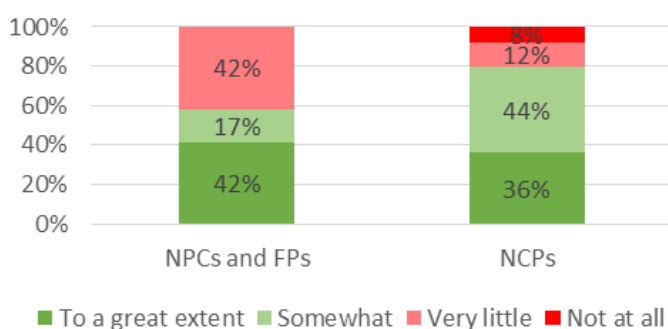
Figure 2.4 NCPs: To what extent is CEPOL's system/process for the identification of training needs effective and comprehensive?



Source: NCPs survey, 2015; N=25

While there is overall satisfaction with the mechanism for agreeing on training activities, the survey results indicated that there is, to some extent, room to further improve the involvement of national actors in the needs identification process. This seems to be more prominent for NPCs and FPs (as 42% thought they were involved very little) than for NCPs.

Figure 2.5 To what extent are you involved in the needs assessment/process of the identification of training needs?



Source: NPCs and FPs survey 2015; NCPs survey 2015; $N_{NPC/FP}=12$; $N_{NCP}=25$

This was also confirmed through interviews where some GB members pointed out the need for more consultation at national level when putting forward/rating priorities. As indicated, NCPs are able to consult with police forces when undertaking the annual needs assessment, but not all of them elect to do so.

Are the objectives and tasks of CEPOL, as stated in Articles 6 and 7 of the Council Decision 2005/681/JHA, still relevant to law enforcement needs? To what extent are the objectives of CEPOL SMART?

While the system for identifying the training needs of LEA is considered to be effective in order to ensure the relevance of CEPOL activities, some concerns were put forward concerning the relevance of the objectives and tasks of CEPOL, as stated in Articles 6 and 7 of the Council Decision 2005/681/JHA, to law enforcement needs.

The consultation undertaken for this evaluation showed that stakeholders increasingly perceive the strategic objectives defined in the 2005 Council Decision as outdated and limiting the relevance of the Agency, something which had already been noted, albeit by a smaller proportion of stakeholders, in the 2012 study. According to respondents, the current decision does not enable CEPOL to perform effectively and consistently according to the EU's evolving training needs.

This shift in perception might be due to the fact that CEPOL's new legal basis is currently under negotiation and the newly defined objectives are perceived as improving the relevance of CEPOL and its activities. Firstly, the objectives included in Article 3 of the new regulation clearly mention its contribution to the implementation of the LETS. Secondly, Article 3 makes reference, in addition to the areas covered by the LETS, to training related to law enforcement leadership and language skills, which, as shown in section 2.2.2 above, are amongst the more pressing training needs of LEA across the EU. Moreover, Article 3 gives CEPOL the responsibility of developing and regularly updating learning tools and methodologies. This is in line with the findings of the 2012 study that indicated that CEPOL certainly had the potential to become a centre of excellence, taking on an advisory role in the development of EU policies on law enforcement training.

In addition, the scope of CEPOL's mandate is broadened so that it can support, develop, deliver and coordinate learning activities for law enforcement officials of all ranks (not only police officers of senior rank as is the case under the current CEPOL decision) as well as for customs officers and other relevant services dealing with cross-border issues. Limiting eligibility to senior police officers was perceived, in the past, as one of the main weaknesses of the 2005 Council Decision and of potentially reducing the relevance of the Agency and its activities in the law enforcement world.

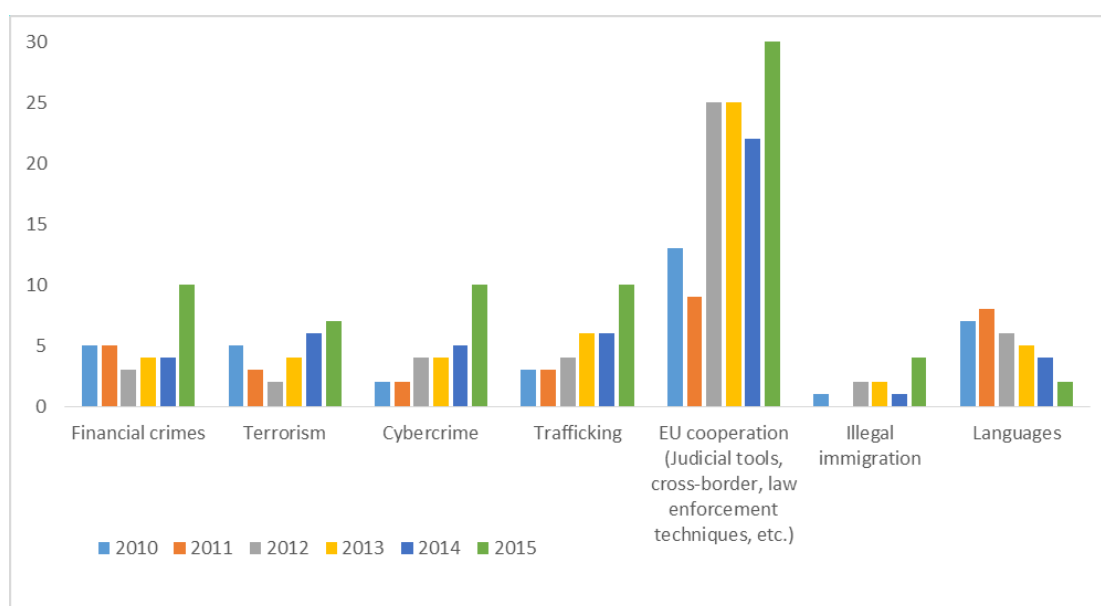
Training and learning activities

To what extent have the unmet needs for law enforcement training – at national or transnational levels – been covered by CEPOL learning and training activities? To what extent were training and learning activities able to continuously improve and respond to Member States' needs and respond to the recommendations from evaluations?

Evidence collected so far has shown that, overall, law enforcement training needs are adequately covered by CEPOL learning and training activities. Also, training and learning activities organised by the Agency have been continuously improved to respond to Member States' needs.

Between 2010 and 2015, CEPOL organised training and online courses covering the priority areas identified by most of the stakeholders interviewed in this evaluation (see section 2.2.2 above). Figure 2.6 below provides an overview of the courses implemented in the following areas: financial crimes, terrorism, cybercrime, trafficking, EU cooperation (judicial tools, cross-border issues, law enforcement techniques, etc.) and languages (which were identified by the stakeholders interviewed as the main current training needs of national police forces). With language courses the only exception, the analysis outlines an overall increase in the number of courses organised across all thematic areas identified as priorities for the needs of law enforcement officers, which shows the capacity of the Agency to respond to the evolution in training needs and provide relevant training activities for the target group.

Figure 2.6 CEPOL courses organised in priority thematic areas 2010–2014



Sources: Annual Reports 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, Annual Work Programme 2015

Table 2.1 outlines the different “sub-areas” covered in the period 2010–2015 within financial crimes, terrorism, cybercrime, trafficking and irregular migration. The table shows that most of the sub-areas were covered extensively in the period 2010–2015, however, only four sub-areas were covered every year thus ensuring learning continuity over the evaluation period (namely, fraud and confiscation, counterterrorism, child abuse and trafficking in human beings).

Table 2.1 Thematic sub-areas covered in 2010–2015

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Financial crimes						
Corruption	X	X		X	X	X

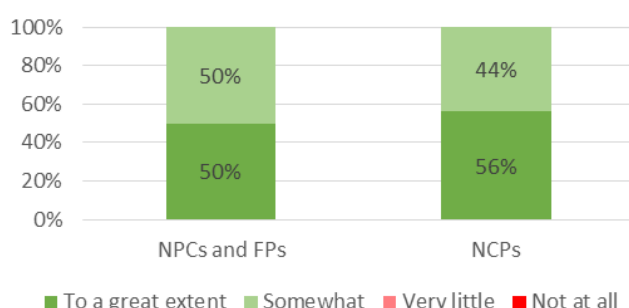
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Fraud and confiscation	X	X	X	X	X	X
Counterfeiting	X				X	X
Money laundering	X	X	X	X	X	X
Terrorism						
Counterterrorism	X	X	X	X	X	X
Airport security	X				X	X
Explosives disposal				X	X	X
Radicalisation					X	X
Cybercrime						
Child abuse	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cybercrime & high-tech	X	X	X			
Cybercrime forensics			X		X	X
Investigating cybercrime			X	X	X	
Cybersecurity				X	X	X
Cybercrime fraud						X
Trafficking						
Firearms trafficking	X	X			X	X
Trafficking in stolen artwork	X	X				
Trafficking in human beings	X	X	X	X	X	X
Container shipment trafficking			X	X	X	X
Environmental and wildlife trafficking			X			X
Cigarette smuggling						X
Drug trafficking			X		X	X
Irregular immigration						
Facilitation of illegal immigration					X	
Organised crime and illegal immigration	X		X			X
Markets related to illegal immigration			X	X		X

Sources: Annual Reports 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, Annual Work Programme 2015

The consultation with GB members indicated that, overall, CEPOL learning and training activities are considered highly relevant to the participants' needs.

GB members indicated that feedback from participants, concerning the relevance of CEPOL activities, was positive overall. Interviews with GB members showed that the expectations of participants were met overall. This is also confirmed by the ICF survey data. The NPCs, FPs and NCPs were asked to comment on the extent to which CEPOL learning and training activities are relevant to the national law enforcement training needs (see figure below). All respondents agreed that activities are relevant (somewhat or to a great extent).

Figure 2.7 In your view, to what extent are CEPOL learning and training activities relevant to national law enforcement training needs?



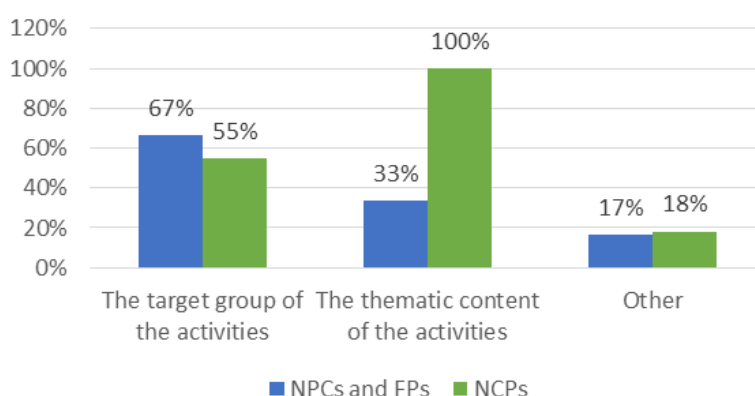
Source: NPCs and FPs survey, NCPs survey 2015; $N_{NPC/FP}=12$; $N_{NCP}=25$

Despite overall agreement on the relevance of CEPOL learning and training activities, it is important to note that 15% of the NCPs surveyed disagreed with the statement *all topics covered reflect the priorities identified by police staff*. It therefore seems that NCPs are slightly more critical with regard to the relevance of topics covered by CEPOL learning and training activities (compared with NPCs/FPs) and this despite a greater involvement in the process of identification of training needs (see Figure 2.5 above). Unfortunately, no information could be gathered on the reasons underpinning this criticism.

Moreover, the surveyed stakeholders (NPCs/FPs and NCPs) also pointed out the need to further improve the thematic content of the activities and target the activities more accurately (see figure below). In particular, all NCPs surveyed indicated that a higher degree of relevance could be achieved by modifying the thematic content of activities. Respondents specified that, in some instances, the topics covered tend to be too general; participants and practitioners would prefer more specific and targeted topics. The need to cover more specific themes was also highlighted during interviews with GB members, as well as during the focus groups organised for this study. During the focus groups, in fact, stakeholders indicated the need to improve the consistency of the information included in the course programmes and curricula. When looking at the curricula of courses specifically, some inconsistencies were noticed concerning the extent to which the following elements are described: content of the activity, target group and additional information. Moreover, quite generic information is provided about the target group.

The benefits of further specifying the topics to be covered during the learning activity, as well as the profile of participants (the type of work they are engaged in, years of experience, etc.), were acknowledged by the stakeholders attending the focus groups. This, however, should be coupled by a more thorough “screening” of applicant profiles at the national level to ensure that participants actually meet the profile described in the curricula (as further described in section 2.4.2 below).

Figure 2.8 What can be changed to improve the relevance of CEPOL learning and training activities?



Source: NPCs and FPs survey, NCPs survey 2015; $N_{NPC/FP}=6$; $N_{NCP}=11$

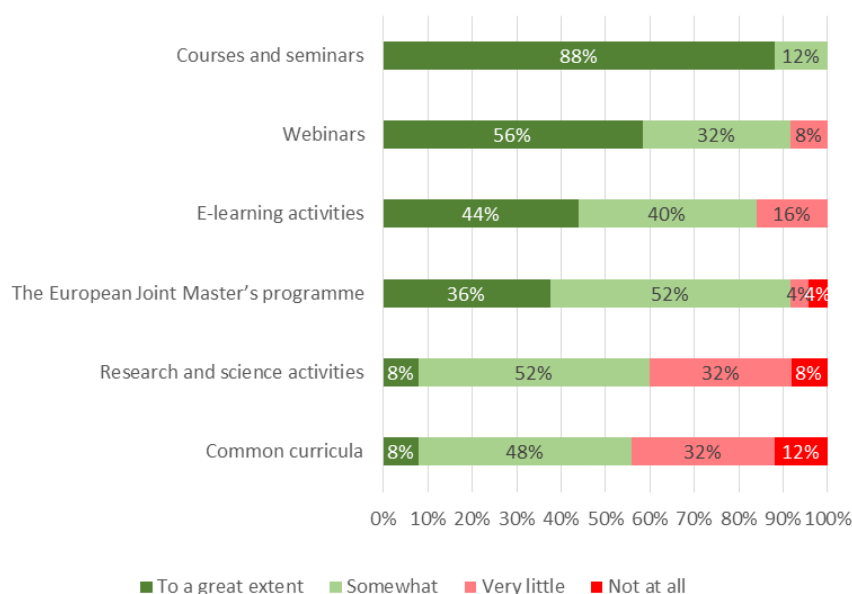
The courses' topics considered by NPCs, FPs and NCPs (consulted through the survey) as particularly relevant for LEA, were the following:

- Learning/training activities covering specific cross-border areas of crime (60% of NPCs/FPs and 67% of NCPs strongly agreed);
- Learning/training activities covering EU police and judicial cooperation and networks (50% of NPCs/FPs and 61% of NCPs strongly agreed);
- Learning/training activities covering the external dimension of the area of freedom, security and justice (42% of NPCs/FPs strongly agreed);
- Learning/training activities covering leadership, learning, training and language development (64% of NCPs strongly agreed).

With regard to the relevance of teaching materials, all the NPCs and FPs which responded to the survey also indicated that teaching materials are tailored to the national needs and situation and are up to date (see Figure 1 in the Annex). The NCPs surveyed were somewhat more critical compared with the NPCs and FPs, as 18% indicated that the teaching materials were not tailored to the national needs and situation (see Figure 2 in the Annex).

The NCPs were also asked about the extent to which different CEPOL learning and training activities were relevant (Figure 2.1 below). Amongst the different training and learning activities proposed by CEPOL, courses and seminars were considered the most relevant activities and "common curricula" the least relevant. This might be due to the fact that, as also mentioned in section 2.4 below, practical obstacles to the implementation of such curricula in the national context are regularly encountered.

Figure 2.9 NCPs: Relevance of CEPOL's learning and training activities

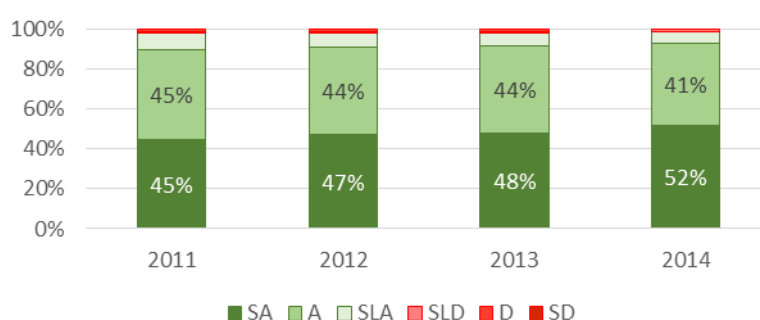


Source: NCPs survey 2015; N=25

The relevance of CEPOL training and learning activities is also confirmed by the fact that, in most cases, participants chose to get involved in such activities on their own initiative (61% of 169 respondents of the participant survey) and/ or following a suggestion from their line manager (49% of 169 respondents). This means that the themes covered and activities proposed by CEPOL are deemed relevant to their career development.

Evidence also shows that, over the evaluation period, the share of participants whose expectations were constantly met increased (Figure 2.10). In 2014, more than half the participants strongly agreed that their expectations had been met. Only one per cent of participants slightly disagreed with the statement.

Figure 2.10 My expectations of the course/seminar were met (2011–2014)



Source: CEPOL's Course Evaluation, 2011–2014; N₂₀₁₁=NI ; N₂₀₁₂=1,623; N₂₀₁₃=1,792; N₂₀₁₄=1,870

The courses and training activities organised by CEPOL are not only considered relevant by implementing partners, NCPs and participants but also by other EU and international organisations. For example, Interpol reported having used the webinars, developed by CEPOL, internally. The webinars were distributed internally to members and the topics were considered to be relevant by the users (i.e. are adapted to the needs of police officers not only in the EU but also around the world). Some modules are very EU focused but this is also useful for police officers outside the EU to further their knowledge about EU

instruments. Some learning points could also be applied in third countries. There is good potential for transferability in CEPOL's training content.

While the training and learning activities organised by CEPOL were judged relevant overall to the (evolving) needs of LEA, some weaknesses were also highlighted. For example, a GB member pointed out that some issues are only encountered if there is a sudden request/sudden training need to be addressed. As the courses need to be approved by GB members, and this procedure is quite time consuming, there is no flexibility to add courses during the year to address urgent training needs. While there is overall consensus on the need for more flexibility to address such urgent/ad hoc needs, stakeholders also stressed that CEPOL is bound by EU financial regulation. The rules set up at EU level do not allow for setting aside an "unallocated" budget to fund urgent/emergency measures or to simplify the call system for specific courses. The only option available is to use the underspend (at the end of the year) to fund additional activities addressing urgent/ad hoc needs. However, this sometimes proves to be difficult.

In line with these findings, a GB member also pointed out that CEPOL is *doing its best to address the evolving needs as quickly as possible. However, the Agency has to comply with EU regulations (EU budget planning cycle, grant agreement procedure, annual negotiation of the budget, etc.)*. This limits the extent to which the Agency can quickly adapt to changing circumstances.

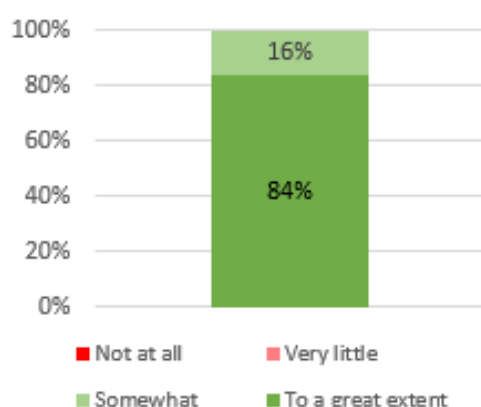
The EPEP

To what extent have the exchanges been relevant to the objectives of the EPEP and the needs of the beneficiaries? What was the extent to which the EPEP was able to continuously improve and respond to Member States' needs and to the recommendations of evaluations?

Evidence gathered so far has shown that EPEP-related activities were considered to be fully relevant to the needs of participants. Compared to courses and other learning activities, the relevance of the EPEP is mainly ensured by the fact that individual participants (and their colleagues) are directly involved in drafting the exchange programme. This enables full alignment of the EPEP with the individual needs of the participants.

Overall, survey results showed that the EPEP is considered a highly relevant programme for the needs of LEA. The EPEP was considered by the NCPs the most relevant activity implemented by CEPOL. More specifically, NCPs found the EPEP to be, to a great extent, relevant to the needs of LEA (as shown in the figure below). However, 16% of respondents thought that some improvements could be made. Of those who mentioned that such improvements should be introduced, 75% indicated that both changes to the content of the activities and the target group should be made.

Figure 2.11 NCPs: In your view, to what extent is the EPEP relevant to the needs of law enforcement authorities in your country?



Source: NCPs survey 2015, N=25

The NCPs were also asked to share their opinions on the relevance of the topics covered by the EPEP, the target audience and the prerequisites for participation. Sixty-seven per cent of respondents strongly agreed that the topics covered by the programme reflected the learning priorities identified by police staff. The results of the ICF survey about the relevance of the EPEP are confirmed by the 2014 CEPOL National Exchange Coordinators survey. The latter in fact shows that 28% strongly agreed and 63% agreed that EPEP topics sufficiently covered the training needs of their countries.

Despite the positive assessment concerning the relevance of the EPEP, some (minor) concerns were also collated through stakeholder consultation. One GB member, for example, stated that the relevance of the EPEP as a “stand alone” activity is rather low. The relevance of the EPEP increases only if combined with other activities such as courses and webinars. Another GB member pointed out that, in order to increase the relevance of the programme, an accreditation system should be introduced: “The exchange would need to be recognised in the national system like the Erasmus programme. An accreditation of this learning experience should be sought as currently done for the Master Programme”.

2.3 The coherence and complementarity of CEPOL

This section assesses the extent to which CEPOL activities are complementary (externally) to those of EU/international and national stakeholders and logical (internally)

2.3.1 Complementarity between CEPOL’s activities and national training and exchange activities

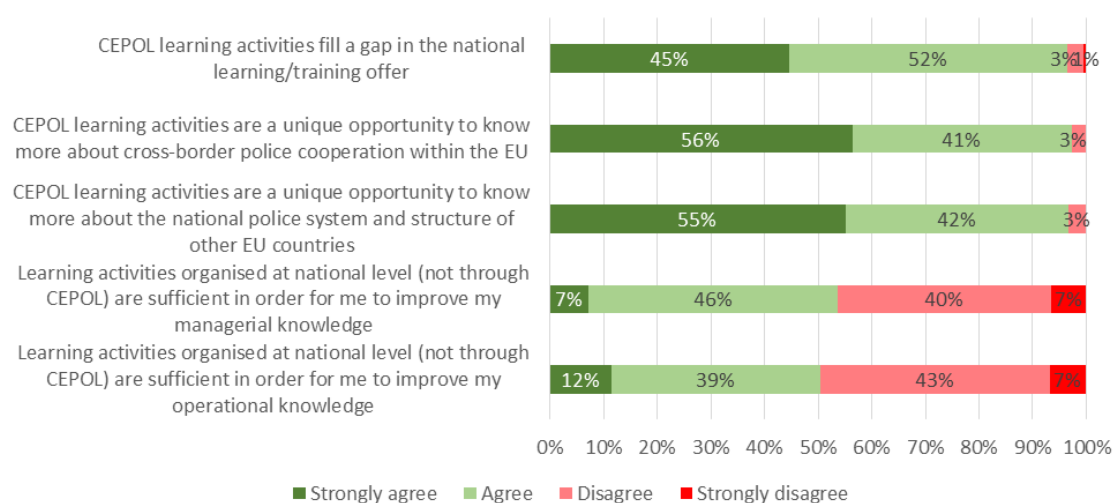
Research conducted into law enforcement training offered in the EU (CEPOL, 2013)⁸ found that while most Member States provide some basic teaching for their national police officers on European cross-border law enforcement cooperation, this was not considered sufficient to address existing needs. The survey conducted for this evaluation found the same results: around half CEPOL’s training participants surveyed considered that learning activities organised at national level were insufficient for improving operational knowledge (73/147 respondents) or managerial know-how (64/138 respondents).

CEPOL training activities aimed to fill this gap in learning activities on European cross-border law enforcement cooperation. The survey conducted for this evaluation found that the majority of respondents (162/168) agreed that CEPOL learning activities did fill a gap in the national learning/training offer.

Survey respondents highlighted which gaps CEPOL’s activities filled, e.g. the majority agreed that CEPOL learning activities were unique in teaching them about national police systems and structures in other EU countries (177/183 respondents) and about cross-border police cooperation within the EU (176/181 respondents). These results are illustrated in the figure below.

⁸ CEPOL (2013) European Training Scheme: Mapping of Law Enforcement Training in the European Union

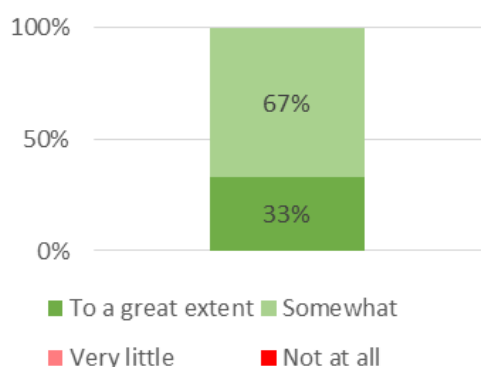
Figure 2.12 Views of national participants in CEPOL training on the value of and need for CEPOL training



Source: Participants' survey, 2015; $N_1=168$; $N_2=181$; $N_3=183$; $N_4=138$; $N_5=147$

The survey of NPCs and FPs confirmed the opinion that there is no overlap between CEPOL's and nationally organised learning and training activities for law enforcement officials (Figure 2.13 below). One third of respondents to these surveys found CEPOL activities were complementary to a great extent and two thirds to some extent.

Figure 2.13 To what extent were CEPOL activities complementary to the national activities related to training for law enforcement officials?



Source: NPCs and FPs survey, 2015; $N=12$

Almost all LMs (22/24) agreed that different types of learning activities were available through the two – national and EU – channels and 31 out of 33 agreed that CEPOL learning activities complement national ones (see Figure 15 in the Annex).

Whilst the themes covered in the learning and training activities organised by CEPOL⁹ and those organised at national level were on occasion similar, their content and focus differed: GB members reported that CEPOL activities focus on the implementation of EU instruments and legislation/practices across the EU, whilst national activities had a domestic focus (e.g. recent national policy/legislative developments).

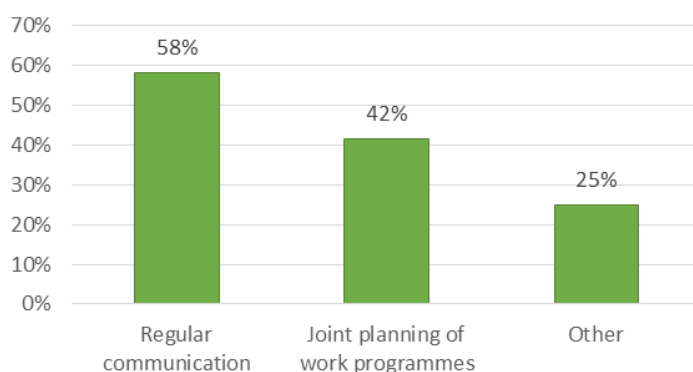
⁹ For example, a 2013 mapping of law enforcement training in the EU (CEPOL, 2013) found that most Member States offer basic training (not through CEPOL) on European cross-border law enforcement cooperation for police and border guards (but less so for customs services)

The new regulation on CEPOL is likely to further improve complementarity between the activities of CEPOL and those of national authorities. The draft regulation stipulates that the type of support to be offered to national LEAs should be indirect/decentralised, such as developing common training curricula for law enforcement officers to participate in EU missions, training the trainer courses, or good practice learning exchanges. The draft regulation nevertheless mentions that CEPOL should still deliver training directly in areas “where training at Union level can add value”¹⁰.

Cooperation and coordination between CEPOL and national actors

According to the results of the NPC and FP survey undertaken for this evaluation, the main mechanisms for cooperation and coordination between CEPOL and national actors are: regular communication (58% of respondents) and joint planning of work programmes (42% of respondents). Other respondents indicated that NCPs were key in monitoring potential duplication and overlaps between CEPOL programmes and national ones.

Figure 2.14 Main cooperation and coordination mechanisms between CEPOL and national actors



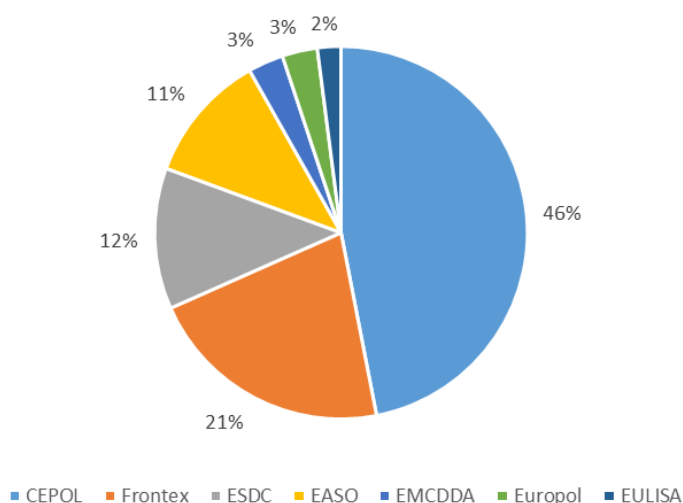
Source: NPCs/FPs survey, 2015; N=12

2.3.2 Coherence and complementarity between CEPOL’s activities and EU training activities of other EU JHA agencies

All seven JHA agencies, considered in the context of this evaluation, (CEPOL, Frontex, European Asylum Support Office (EASO), European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), Europol, European Agency for Large-Scale IT Systems (EULISA) and Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)) as well as the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) provide training to law enforcement agencies. As shown in Figure 2.15 below, CEPOL is the main training provider, having been responsible, in 2014, for 46% of all training activities reported by the agencies participating in the JHA Training Matrix¹¹.

¹⁰ Article 3(1)

¹¹ For more Information on the Training Matrix, see below

Figure 2.15 Number and proportion of training activities implemented in 2014 by JHA agency

Source: CEPOL – Draft report on the JHA Training Matrix 2014

Table 2.2 presents the mandate, target groups and focus of CEPOL and other agencies' training programmes.

Table 2.2 Similarities and differences between CEPOL and other agencies' training programmes

Agency	LEA group target	Training in mandate?	Focus of training
CEPOL	Police officers	Yes	Cross-border crimes, EU cooperation, law enforcement techniques, management, human rights, crime prevention, language courses, train the trainer, the European Joint Master's Programme
Europol	Police officers	Yes	Mainly internal training on improving expertise and professional development
Frontex	Border guards	Yes	Migration, asylum and border issues, EU border protection standards, language courses, train the trainer, the master's programme
Eurojust	All LEA	No	Few independent training activities; mainly experts seconded to support training initiatives of Frontex, CEPOL and the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN)
EMCDDA	All LEA	No	Drugs trafficking
EASO	All LEA	Yes	Migration, asylum and border issues
ESDC	Military	Yes	<i>No info</i>
FRA	All LEA	No	Human rights
OLAF	All LEA	No	Financial crime, counterfeiting

Mapping of training provision by JHA agencies, as well as (a) 2012 CEPOL Study, (b) Director's Review of the JHA Training Matrix, and (c) Communication on the European Law Enforcement Training Scheme, COM(2013) 172

Table 2.2 illustrates overlaps in JHA agencies' target groups. This issue had already been identified in a 2012 study on CEPOL which highlighted similarities between CEPOL's mandate and that of Europol and Frontex which could lead to overlaps in the provision of training/learning activities to law enforcement officers. In practice, however, no overlaps between CEPOL's work and those of these agencies have been reported by stakeholders.

The Stockholm Programme proposes the development of a “genuine European judicial and law enforcement culture”, calling for a “stringent cooperation between EU agencies, including further improving their information exchange”. The 2012 study on CEPOL found that cooperation mechanisms have been set up at three levels: formal, strategic and operational to ensure that cooperation between EU bodies active in the area of JHA was effective and to prevent (potential) overlaps.

Formal cooperation

Formal cooperation agreements exist between CEPOL and European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI), Europol, Frontex, Eurojust, and Interpol. These agreements were set up between 2007 and 2009¹² (outside the scope of this evaluation) except for the agreement with ENFSI which was set up in June 2012¹³.

The agreements set out arrangements for information sharing/exchange; they establish mutual contact points within the agencies, provide that regular meetings should be held and stipulate that common curricula be developed and regularly updated. The Europol and Frontex agreements also outline mutual responsibilities for training of law enforcement officials in the EU¹⁴.

As a result of these agreements, common curricula and exchange programmes for law enforcement officers have been developed and implemented for a number of years¹⁵.

Strategic cooperation

The 2012 CEPOL study found that strategic cooperation between JHA agencies was largely effective. It found that cooperation at a strategic level took place between JHA agencies through various informal (working groups, consultation) and formal mechanisms, such as the ‘JHA Agencies Multilateral Cooperation Scorecard’, an annual action plan agreed at the Annual Heads of JHA Agencies Meeting, considered a useful mechanism for documenting and planning cooperation between agencies¹⁶.

The 2012 study on CEPOL recommended, however, that more could be done to ensure consistency in JHA agencies’ approaches¹⁷ notably to avoid duplication of effort in areas of common interest. It was recommended that CEPOL, Europol and Frontex further align their respective business plans and establish a common approach to management¹⁸, and specifically, that CEPOL aligns its governance structure with EU standards (the model used by Europol and Frontex).

Consultations with CEPOL GB members undertaken for this evaluation suggest that over the last five years (since the last CEPOL evaluation) coordination and complementarity at EU level have, in fact, improved. Firstly, progress has been made in aligning the business plans

¹² See: Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation between Eurojust and CEPOL, 12 July 2009; Cooperation agreement between CEPOL and Europol, 20 October 2007 and Cooperation Agreement between CEPOL; Frontex, 25 June 2009 and the MoU on cooperation between ICPO-Interpol General Secretariat and CEPOL, 12 December 2008

¹³ See: MoU on cooperation between ENFSI and CEPOL of 27 June 2012

¹⁴ See Europol-CEPOL agreement: <https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/strategic-agreement-between-cepoll-and-europol> and the CEPOL Annual Report for 2009: https://www.cepoll.europa.eu/sites/default/files/Annual_Report_2009.pdf

¹⁵ Communication on the European Law Enforcement Training Scheme, COM(2013) 172

¹⁶ See: CEPOL 2012 and 2013 Annual Activity Reports

¹⁷ The report stated that there was a “lack of a common sphere of governance” among the JHA agencies. The consultations undertaken for this study suggest that a common sphere of governance is still lacking between CEPOL and Frontex

¹⁸ The study states that other agencies have, mainly in the past, experienced some difficulties in implementing common activities with CEPOL because of delays in the internal decision-making process and that, in this regard, CEPOL’s new governance structure should improve the effectiveness of cooperation with other agencies

of the different agencies: CEPOL has taken responsibility for coordinating the JHA Training Matrix, a tool introduced in 2014 aimed at enhancing awareness and coordination of the EU training measures provided by EU JHA agencies (see Box 2.1 below).

Box 2.1 The JHA Training Matrix, a strategic cooperation mechanism

The JHA Training Matrix is a tool shared between JHA agencies to register details of planned training activities (tools, e-learning courses, webinars, conferences and face-to-face courses).

CEPOL has responsibility for the coordination of the matrix. The JHA Training Matrix was uploaded on the CEPOL website in August 2014 and “read and write” access was granted to relevant staff of the JHA agencies.

By listing the title, length, target groups and dates of these training events, it is expected that overlaps in activity can be avoided and gaps identified. The matrix also incorporates details of the training offered by the EJTN and the ESDC.

CEPOL recently drafted a report on its implementation¹⁹.

Whilst stakeholders agreed that the existence of the JHA Training Matrix had led to improvements in the coordination of EU JHA agencies’ training activities, and thus in their coherence and complementarity, the draft Director’s Review of the JHA Training Matrix found that some overlaps in activity remained. It highlighted that the matrix should not solely be used “to provide a picture of who does what” but should also be used for planning training, reporting, and management purposes and, also in response to policy requirements, to exploit opportunities for joint actions, and design new training activities on the basis of shared definitions of target audiences and thematic training areas²⁰.

Strategic cooperation between CEPOL and:

- Europol, specifically, has improved over the last five years, notably in the division of tasks between agencies, e.g. responsibility for (most) external training activities for police officers was handed to CEPOL. This follows from Europol’s attendance of CEPOL GB meetings and its inputs into discussions around the design of CEPOL training courses. Europol reportedly appreciates the leading role that senior CEPOL managers have taken in coordinating police training in the EU, particularly since training is not a priority area for Europol²¹. Europol also reports that recent changes in the leadership and management of CEPOL led to improved alignment in the governance of the two agencies.
- Frontex appears to be less developed: Frontex contributes to the JHA Training Matrix and participates with CEPOL in JHA meetings, but does not have inputs into CEPOL training programmes, perhaps due to their different target group. Shortcomings in strategic level cooperation appear to be having an impact on the level of complementarity of the two agencies’ training programmes and notably on the themes covered. For example, CEPOL’s first joint two-year EU master’s course, the European Joint Master’s Programme (EJMP), commenced in October 2015. It aims to further qualify law enforcement officers in the implementation and operationalisation of EU instruments, especially on police cooperation in concrete cross-border settings²². Similarly, Frontex launched a master’s programme in Strategic Border Management²³ in

¹⁹ Director’s review of the JHA Training Matrix – Draft shared with the evaluators

²⁰ Director’s review of the JHA Training Matrix – Draft shared with the evaluators

²¹ Analysis based on consultations with JHA agencies and GB members for this study

²² <http://www.gdr-elsj.eu/2015/01/03/informations-generales/european-joint-master-programme-policing-in-europe-cepol-ensp-ujml3-gdr-cnrs-elsj-2015-2018/>

²³ “Developed by the agency, in collaboration with six partner universities and more than 20 EU border guard training organisations and academies.” Topics covered will be topics such as fundamental rights, risk and threat management, and innovation and technology related to border management
<http://frontex.europa.eu/news/frontex-launches-new-master-s-programme-vqtoEN>

September 2015. This aims to establish common training standards at European level for staff of national agencies with border security responsibility²⁴. The precise course content of both master's programmes²⁵ is unknown at this stage and, thus, potential for overlap is not clear. Overlaps are therefore still likely between CEPOL's and Frontex's training activities on topics such as migration, smuggling of goods and trafficking in human beings.

To counter these issues, at least two GB members consulted suggested that there could be more of a systematic allocation of responsibilities for different thematic areas between Frontex, Europol, Eurojust and CEPOL. The same respondents considered that the new legal mandate for CEPOL could be expected to address these concerns.

Additional avenues for improvements in cooperation at operational level were suggested by CEPOL's director: improvements in the Strategic Training Needs Analysis (STNA), an annual analysis of the results of respective training needs assessments between JHA agencies, as well as further sharing of those²⁶. The STNA is outlined in section 4.1 "Identifying Needs" of the LETS communication and Article 4(1) of the proposed new regulation; however, no formal channel has yet been established.

Operational cooperation

In 2012, the CEPOL study found that "remarkable improvements ha[d] been witnessed recently with regards to the operational level cooperation between the JHA Agencies". Europol, Frontex and CEPOL have cooperated operationally in multiple ways: through the delivery of common activities, through the exchange of information on outcomes and of best practice and through the development of a common approach for exchange programmes/projects. Such operational cooperation has continued and can be said to have improved through the increased use of the JHA Training Matrix.

The 2012 study on CEPOL also indicated that operational cooperation could be improved through greater collaboration between the decentralised components of EU bodies (i.e. between Europol contact points, EJTN contact points and CEPOL NCPs)²⁷. Cooperation amongst NCPs of the different EU JHA agencies would be one means to improve agencies' operational cooperation.

Indications on potential future improvements in the complementarity of CEPOL activities with other EU agencies' activities

The draft legislation of the new regulation for CEPOL addresses potential overlaps in training between EU agencies. Article 3(1) states that "CEPOL shall support, develop and coordinate training for law enforcement officers" in particular in listed thematic areas²⁸. However, the wording of this article still leaves the possibility open for CEPOL to work in other areas that might be covered also by other agencies and thus does not completely eradicate the risk of overlaps.

²⁴ <http://frontex.europa.eu/news/frontex-launches-new-master-s-programme-vqtoEN>

²⁵ "CEPOL's master's programme consists of seven modules: Module I — General introduction and methodology; Module II — International and comparative policing; Module III — Governance and strategic aspects of international police cooperation; Module IV — Legal and regulatory aspects of European police cooperation; Module V — Operational aspects of European police cooperation; Module VI — Management and leadership; Module VII — Master's thesis". <https://www.cepola.europa.eu/sites/default/files/european-joint-master-programme-brochure.pdf>

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ 2012 study on CEPOL

²⁸ The fight against serious crime and terrorism affecting two or more Member States, management of high-risk public order and sport events, planning and command of Union missions, as well as law enforcement leadership and language skills

Furthermore, while the draft regulation recognises CEPOL's coordinating role, it does not formalise CEPOL's role in coordinating EU training efforts (when in fact, this role has been increasingly recognised in EU-level policy documents, e.g. the European Agenda on Security, as noted in section 2.2). Preventing such overlaps is likely to be more relevant at operational level, e.g. by using tools such as the JHA Training Matrix.

2.3.3 The internal complementarity of CEPOL

Were CEPOL's actions internally coherent? Were CEPOL's learning and training activities internally coherent? Were the EPEP's objectives and actions in line with CEPOL's Strategy 2010–2014? Were the EPEP's objectives and actions conducted in the 11 CEPOL thematic areas?

What are the main areas for improvement?

Were CEPOL's actions internally coherent? Were CEPOL's learning and training activities internally coherent? Were the EPEP's objectives and actions in line with CEPOL's Strategy 2010–2014? Were the EPEP's objectives and actions conducted in the 11 CEPOL thematic areas?

In the period under consideration, CEPOL had made some progress towards addressing the recommendations of the five-year evaluation. Firstly, the need to streamline the training offer was reflected at governing level. In fact, two GB decisions introduced a more strategic approach to the development of a product range:

- Decision 31/2011/GB replacing GB Decision 43/2010/GB on CEPOL Strategy and Balanced Scorecard, includes thematic areas and the outputs and outcomes of these will provide for the 2010–2014 period; and
- Decision 21/2010/GB adopting the Multi-Annual Action Plan 2011–2014, highlights that “CEPOL will adopt a more strategic approach to activities”.

Following those decisions, some progress was made in order towards reducing the thematic priorities included in the annual training catalogues. The number of thematic areas covered by training activities (courses, seminars and conferences) was reduced from 16 in 2011 to 11 (2012–2014), and to 10 in 2015.

The table below provides a comprehensive overview of CEPOL's thematic priorities covered in the period 2011–2015.

Table 2.3 Thematic priorities included in the annual training catalogues (2011–2015)

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 ²⁹
	1. Serious and Organised Crime Following the EU Policy Cycle	1. EU Policy Cycle Instrument and Priorities	1. Organised Crime Following the EU Policy Cycle	1. EU Policy Cycle 2014–2017
1. Organised Crime – Regional	2. Other Organised Crime	2. Other Organised Crime	2. Other Organised Crime	2. Other Organised International Crime, Including Financial Crime
2. Counter Terrorism, Terrorism and Extremism	3. Counter Terrorism	3. Counter Terrorism	3. Counter Terrorism	3. Counter Terrorism
3. Economic, Financial and Environmental Crime	4. Economic Crime	4. Economic Crime	4. Economic Crime	
4. Police Systems and Instruments Within the EU	5. Special Law Enforcement Techniques	5. Law Enforcement Techniques	5. Law Enforcement Techniques	4. Special Law Enforcement Techniques
5. Police Cooperation Within the EU	6. EU Cooperation	6. EU Cooperation	6. EU Cooperation	5. EU Police and Judicial Cooperation and Networks
6. Violation of Human Rights	7. Human Rights Issues	7. Human Rights	7. Human Rights	6. Fundamental Rights
7. Prevention of Crime	8. Crime Prevention	8. Crime Prevention	8. Crime Prevention	7. Crime Prevention ³⁰
8. Learning, Training and Research	9. Research and Science	9. Research and Science	9. Research and Science	8. Research and Science
9. Language Development	10. Learning and Training	10. Learning and Training	10. Learning and Training	9. Leadership, Learning, Training and Language Development
10. Strategic Management and Leadership	11. Management	11. Management	11. Management	
11. Public Order				10. Maintenance of Law and Order and Public Security
12. Police Cooperation with Third Countries				11. External Dimension of the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
13. Community Policing				
14. Illegal Immigration and Border Management				
15. Illicit Trafficking of Goods				
16. Common Curricula Implementation Seminars	12. Agency-based Activities			

²⁹ Discrepancies with information provided in Annual Working Programme and Training Catalogue 2015. Crime Prevention is mentioned only in the Training Catalogue 2015

³⁰ Mentioned only in Training Catalogue 2015

Although, in theory, the number of thematic priorities decreased over the evaluation period, the analysis above shows that some thematic priorities were reallocated/merged rather than being completely disbanded. For example, after 2011, the thematic priorities “Illegal Immigration”, “Border Management” and “Illicit Trafficking of Goods” were covered as part of the EU policy cycle thematic priority. The latter in fact covers a wide range of topics.

The 2012 study indicated an overall lack of synergy between different activities implemented by CEPOL as well as some weaknesses in delivering an “integrated package”. The study called for a more integrated use of e-learning as part of a longer training programme covering both e-learning and classroom-oriented learning.

During the evaluation period, 2011–2015, synergies between the different learning and training tools developed by CEPOL were consolidated. For example, in 2013, when one of the training courses’ topics was “Trafficking in human beings”, an e-learning module of the same name was also developed. Such direct complementarity was found in the majority of e-learning modules. It is also interesting to note that, over time, more e-learning modules on leadership learning and language development have been launched to reflect the offer provided by courses. This gives participants the opportunity to first familiarise themselves with a topic through an e-learning activity and then gain a more in-depth knowledge of the subject matter through attending a course or seminar.

With regard to the EPEP, participants can choose to focus their exchange on only one of the 11 CEPOL thematic areas, thus ensuring perfect alignment with the priorities determined by the GB³¹. This requirement ensures that all three learning tools – e-learning modules, residential courses and seminars – and the EPEP are internally coherent and enable participants to experience a full learning cycle.

The majority of stakeholders consulted in this evaluation highlighted that, during the last five years, the internal coherence of the Annual Programmes has significantly improved. In the view of stakeholders consulted, a better division and streamlining of the thematic areas covered, the enhanced use of webinars and the Learning Management System (LMS) for courses were factors that contributed to the creation of synergies between the different learning tools.

Most of the interviewees consulted pointed out that the activities developed by CEPOL are strongly complementary. CEPOL provides, to some extent, a step-by-step learning offer, comprising online modules and webinars (which are easily accessible to participants), residential courses (to broaden knowledge of the topic) and the EPEP (which complements the knowledge with a practical approach to learning and exchange of experiences). An officer could therefore broaden his/her knowledge through different learning tools if he/she chose to. The different activities also address the different learning needs of participants.

What are the main areas for improvement?

In order to further improve the internal coherence of CEPOL’s offer, efforts could be invested in further reducing the thematic focus of activities and prioritising activities within the “core business” of the Agency (i.e. those activities bringing EU added value or with innovative components).

Moreover, the findings showed that, despite the improvements mentioned above, there is still room for increasing synergies between the different learning and training tools developed by CEPOL and the extent to which a step-by-step learning offer is provided.

More information on these recommendations is provided in section 3.2 of this report.

³¹ EPEP User Guide, 2014

2.4 The effectiveness and impact of CEPOL and its activities

This section assesses the extent to which CEPOL has been effective in implementing its activities and reaching its objectives

2.4.1 Extent to which CEPOL's objectives were met

To what extent have the objectives set out in Article 6 of Council Decision 2005/681/JHA been met?

To what extent has CEPOL contributed to achieving the objectives set in relevant policy documents (e.g. to develop an EU area of internal security, to promote better information exchange, increased operational cooperation and mutual trust, to raise the profile of EU instruments for police cooperation and the role of EU agencies, etc.)

To what extent have the goals and the strategic objectives set out in the Multi-Annual Strategy Plan 2010–2014 been achieved? Are the key performance indicators being met?

Were the activities planned overall implemented in practice?

CEPOL's hierarchy of objectives is multi-fold. For the evaluation, the objectives were understood as either those stated in the CEPOL's mandate or as the goals and strategic objectives outlined in the 2010–2014 strategy³².

CEPOL's 2005 Council Decision describes the purpose of CEPOL as being to help train the senior police officers of the Member States by optimising cooperation between CEPOL's various components. It further lists three objectives³³:

- To increase knowledge of the national police systems and structures of other Member States and of cross-border police cooperation within the European Union;
- To improve knowledge of international and Union instruments and in particular the institutions of the European Union, Europol and Eurojust; and,
- To provide appropriate training with regard to respect for democratic safeguards.

Whilst CEPOL's mandate refers to four main objectives, the 2010–2014 strategy contains four goals and 24 strategic objectives. For the sake of measuring the effectiveness of the Agency, a hierarchy of objectives has been reconstructed on the basis of the above two documents, depicted in Table 2.4 below.

³² Refer to DECISION 21A/2013/GB

³³ Refer to Articles 5 & 6 of Council Decision 2005/681/JHA, 20 September 2005 establishing the European Police College (CEPOL)

Table 2.4 Reconstructed intervention logic of the Agency

Main objectives	Specific objectives	Activities	Objectives related to outputs	Objectives related to outcomes
To increase knowledge of cross-border law enforcement cooperation in the European Union and its neighbourhood	To broaden the knowledge base around European law enforcement	Researcher networking	Researcher database	Strengthened Member State cooperation Contribution to EU policymaking European approach to the main problems facing Member States in the field of law enforcement and the fight against organised crime, crime prevention and the maintenance of law and order
		Dissemination of research findings	Publications issued	
		Communication and awareness raising	Conferences, seminars etc.	
	To develop common training common curriculum, methods and tools	Preparation of harmonised training programmes	EU level and MS training programmes aligned	
		Designing and enabling access to online modules	Online modules	
		E-learning systems		
	To deliver training courses in the field of law enforcement cooperation and the fight against organised crime	Delivery of training	Training courses	Enhanced police officer knowledge, capabilities and skills; cascading knowledge in police forces; continued learning and networking effect between participants; changes in practices, behaviours and ways of working; enhanced police cooperation More effective policing
	To organise exchange programmes	Conducting exchange programmes	Exchange programmes	
To strengthen inter-institutional and international cooperation in the field of law enforcement	To cooperate with: ■ EU agencies and bodies ■ Associated states as well as candidate and accession countries ■ Significant international partners ■ Civil society	Stakeholder relationship management	Joint activities/work programmes	Coherence of CEPOL interventions
			External relations, cooperation agreements, joint activities	
			Policy dialogue, communication, awareness raising, and media relations	
To manage the Agency in line with its mandate	To comply with: ■ CEPOL's mandate ■ Staff regulation ■ Financial regulation	Improving CEPOL organisational structure, governance and decision-making processes and systems, and administrative support	Compliance with mandate, staff regulations and financial regulation	Support for CEPOL core tasks
		Human resource recruitment, development and performance monitoring		
		Sound financial management via programme planning, implementation and reporting		

The advantage of measuring the Agency's effectiveness against the above hierarchy of objectives can be found in the clarity of the cause and effect chain linking the objectives to activities and to results (i.e. outputs, outcomes and impacts). As such, it lays out the framework for the assessment of the effectiveness of the Agency.

To what extent have the objectives set out in Article 6 of Council Decision 2005/681/JHA been met?

The objectives in Article 6 of Council Decision 2005/681/JHA were:

- To increase knowledge of the national police systems and structures of other Member States and of cross-border police cooperation within the European Union;
- To improve knowledge of international and Union instruments and in particular the institutions of the European Union, Europol and Eurojust; and
- To provide appropriate training with regard to respect for democratic safeguards.

Overall, the Agency has fulfilled the objectives, as stated in its mandate, over the evaluation period. The first and the second objectives (enhancing knowledge) were mostly achieved through training and learning activities.

With regard to training and learning activities, stakeholders interviewed viewed them as effective. The high satisfaction of police officers attending training courses organised through CEPOL demonstrates the effectiveness of the Agency's activities in the field³⁴. The participants in the training courses and their LMs surveyed as part of the evaluation overwhelmingly acknowledged that thematic knowledge and knowledge of the national police systems and structures of other EU countries had improved over the period. Factors contributing to the effectiveness of the Agency in organising training courses were:

- The continuous evaluation of those activities and the corresponding continuous improvement and corrective actions taken as a result;
- The organisation of activities through (improved) grant agreements contributed to raising the quality of the training and for training places to be fully filled;
- The tools developed by the Agency such as E-Net and Webinars were regarded as incentivising the exchange of good practices, contributing to open learning, and facilitated the dissemination of knowledge developed or supported by the Agency³⁵.

The ways in which the Agency could improve the effectiveness of the training and learning activities in increasing knowledge were cited as follows:

- Continue to improve the grant agreement system by: streamlining the application process to avoid prohibitive administrative costs, avoiding focusing too much on value-for-money services as an award criteria³⁶, streamlining administrative requirements (e.g. by allowing for some flexibility in the allocation of budgetary resources and/or replacement of experts delivering the training, to avoid underspending), increasing the monitoring of the quality of the services rendered during and following the implementation of training and learning activities;
- To measure the effect of the training courses on the participants' body of knowledge other than by way of satisfaction surveys, looking at long-term effects;

³⁴ For reference, two interviewees expressed some doubts about the very high satisfaction rate expressed by attendees

³⁵ For reference, two interviewees, whilst acknowledging tools to be efficient in delivering the required knowledge, questioned their effectiveness in delivering the EU added value of CEPOL (i.e. common enforcement culture, networking effect, etc.)

³⁶ For instance by putting more weight on the following selection criteria:

- the quality of the services rendered
- the creativity and innovation of the training suggested in the application for grants

- To preselect (or vet) the participants on the basis of their profile, know-how and/or future role in cross-border cooperation prior to their attending the training, to further enhance the quality of the training and the networking effect of such training³⁷;
- To preselect (vet) and evaluate the experts delivering training at Member State level to ensure the transfer of technical skills, innovative training techniques, and robust subject-matter expertise;
- To further involve other JHA agencies in the (joint) provision of training;
- To consider a variety of means for delivering training according to the content of the course (e.g. basic training or traditional courses brought online or being of a shorter length, more cutting-edge subjects benefiting from extended training including practical exercises).

With regard to the EPEP, stakeholders interviewed viewed the programme as highly effective. It was regarded by most stakeholders as a success story in promoting an EU-wide law enforcement culture. The positive results of the annual survey of participants of the exchange programmes is an additional indicator of its effectiveness. The participants in the EPEP and their LMs – surveyed as part of the evaluation – overwhelmingly acknowledged that their knowledge of the national police systems and structures of other EU countries as well as their knowledge of cross-border police cooperation within the EU improved over the period. Factors contributing to the effectiveness of the Agency in supporting the exchange programmes were:

- A team within the Agency dedicated to the exchange programme allowing for the tailoring of the exchange programmes to the participants' and host organisations' goals and needs;
- The willingness of police officers to participate in the exchanges;
- The level of expertise available in the host country;
- The extension of the programme to neighbouring countries proved effective, notwithstanding the impact it had on the Agency's budget.

The ways in which the Agency could improve the effectiveness of the exchange programme in increasing knowledge were cited as follows:

- Improve the quality of the exchange programme by improving the matching process between participants and host countries. For instance the requests from participants to go to specific units and/or countries should have more prominence than matching carried out on the basis of thematic areas;
- Further invest in the programme to reap the benefits derived from the EPEP by monitoring the extent to which hosting agreements are complied with, monitoring the full execution of the plans framing the exchange programme and supporting the exchange organisers with regard to the content and learning outcomes of the exchanges.

With regard to the third objective (appropriate training with regard to respect for democratic safeguards), very little evidence was gathered. The evaluators are therefore unable to assess the performance of the Agency in this area.

Omitted from the mandate of the Council decision was objective of ensuring the effectiveness of CEPOL's communication activities: they were considered satisfactory, but

³⁷ The training should be targeted to a specific audience to improve their effectiveness and impact. People would need to specify their rank prior to the course and the selection process would need to take this information into account in order to make the content of the courses more tailored to the level of the participant

with room for improvement³⁸. For instance, CEPOL's visibility is increasing at Member State level through its web and social media presence, presentations to national LEA and NCPs' communication activities. This contributes to the increased knowledge of CEPOL's activities and of the work of JHA agencies in the law enforcement field³⁹. Communication activities could nevertheless be strengthened by using more advanced communication tools as, in the past, most communication was done through email.

To what extent did CEPOL contribute to achieving the objectives set up in relevant policy documents?

The objectives set out in the relevant CEPOL policy documents included:

- to develop an EU area of internal security;
- to promote better information exchange;
- to increase operational cooperation and mutual trust;
- to raise the profile of EU instruments for police cooperation and the role of EU agencies.

With regard to the first objective, the rationale for the existence of the Agency was to contribute to cross-border police cooperation through training and exchanges of police officers across the EU and through collaboration with other agencies in the field of law enforcement. As evidenced in the sections above, participants in such learning and training activities regarded them as effective and useful. In addition, all NPCs and FPs who responded to the survey were of the view that CEPOL learning and training activities had a visible impact on the development of a European approach to the fight against crime, to crime prevention, and the maintenance of law and order and public security. Little additional evidence was collected from the desk research and interviewees. From the information collected through the survey, it can be argued that through its activities and impact, CEPOL has contributed to the development of EU internal security. As mentioned in section 2.3.2 above, CEPOL is mentioned in the recent European Agenda on Security. CEPOL is also regularly involved in the policy cycle. In particular, the Agency is involved in drafting the Operational Action Plan and its training component in close cooperation with the Member States and Europol.

With regard to the second objective, CEPOL promoted better information exchange through a number of its activities, be it training and learning activities, communication activities directly or through NPCs, through the design and roll-out of tools, or collaboration with other JHA agencies. Although only partial evidence has been collected through the survey, it could be argued that this objective has been somewhat fulfilled. Survey results show that:

- 78% of NPCs who responded to the survey were engaged in collecting and disseminating information to all relevant target audiences in the Member States; 29% thought that more could be done in this area;
- The majority of participants in the training courses and in the exchange programmes were able to capture and share knowledge and cascade it through at national level

With regard to the third objective, the survey results demonstrated that the majority of participants engaged in learning and training activities acquired managerial and operational knowledge related to cross-border cooperation in law enforcement. Stakeholders interviewed stated that CEPOL activities contributed to a common culture at EU level. It could be argued that this common culture, the organisation of exchanges and ad hoc networks de facto

³⁸ According to one stakeholder interviewed, citing the results of a EURANET and internal EU survey run in Germany, the German general public and/or law enforcement personnel knew little of the name of the Agency nor its activities

³⁹ The Agency provided its knowledge base to all EU Member States. It also announced its training offering to upcoming EU legislations strategies and recommendations. As a result, the 28 EU Member States have the same information and a similar understanding of it

created, contributed to mutual trust and created an environment in which operational cooperation could thrive.

With regard to the fourth objective, the content of CEPOL training and learning activities revolved around the presentation of the EU instruments for police cooperation and the role of EU agencies. In addition, CEPOL's collaboration with Europol and Eurojust and the delivery of joint training, promoted the respective role and activities of JHA agencies in the field of law enforcement. Participants surveyed reported that they were more aware of the existence of relevant instruments and intended to make more use of them.

To what extent have the goals and the strategic objectives set out in the Multi-Annual Strategy Plan 2010–2014 been achieved? Are key performance indicators being met?

Overall, stakeholders interviewed believed that the Agency had, to some extent, delivered against the goals and strategic objectives. This is also confirmed by the analysis of the CEPOL's Strategy 2010–2014. The strategy contains four goals, which further include a total of 24 strategic objectives measured through key performance indicators.

- Goal 1: The CEPOL network functions as a European law enforcement education platform on the highest level of international excellence – achieved three of its strategic objectives fully and three partially;
- Goal 2: CEPOL will be developed into a European law enforcement knowledge base – achieved one of its strategic objectives fully, one partially and did not achieve two of its strategic objectives;
- Goal 3: External relations will be considered and dealt with as the corner stone of partnerships – achieved three of its strategic objectives fully and did not achieve one of its strategic objectives;
- Goal 4: CEPOL will be lead and managed as a top-ranking innovative EU agency – achieved two of its strategic objectives fully, two partially and did not achieve two of its strategic objectives.

Overall, CEPOL achieved nine of its strategic objectives fully, five partially but five not at all. This demonstrated that the CEPOL strategy has been implemented, but only to some extent. More interestingly, the fact that some of the targets were revised during the period, that some of the objectives are not measured with indicators and that the value of indicators can vary from one Annual Activity Report to another reveal that there is room for improving the monitoring system of the Agency.

The following table is extracted from the Annual Activity Report 2013⁴⁰ and summarises progress in executing the strategy against its key performance indicators.

⁴⁰ The only source used to report against the key performance indicators was the Annual Activity Report 2013, since inconsistencies were found between the different Annual Activity Reports across years

Table 2.5 Progress in the execution of CEPOL's strategy as measures by its key performance indicators

Goal	Strategic Objective	Indicator	2013 Target Value (2012 Target)	Achieved?	
Goal 1: The CEPOL network functions as a European law enforcement education platform on the highest level of international excellence	1.1 To deliver quality training courses on specific subjects	Implementation of training activities (residential training and webinars)	95%	Performance 2013: 105% Performance 2012: 95%	Achieved
		Overall customer satisfaction with activities	91%	Performance 2013: 94% Performance 2012: 93%	Achieved
	1.2: To deliver training for senior leaders	Number of senior leader participants in CEPOL activities	50% (20%)	Performance 2013: 60% Performance 2012: 38%	Achieved
	1.3: Exchange programmes	Overall participant satisfaction	91%	Performance 2013: 98% Performance 2012: 92%	Achieved
	1.4 Common curricula	Number of common curricula adopted by the GB	4	Performance 2013: 5 Performance 2012: 1	Partially
	1.5 Developing e-learning systems	Number of e-modules adopted and revised	3 (4)	Performance 2013: 5 Performance 2012: 4	Achieved
	1.6 Quality learning	Number of registrations in the European Trainers' & Lecturers' Database	100	Performance 2013: 116 nominations Performance 2012: N/A	Achieved
Goal 2: CEPOL will be developed into a European law enforcement knowledge base	2.1 Broadening the knowledge base	Number of items published in the e-Library	1,700 (1,500)	Performance 2013: 1,553* Performance 2012: 1,473	Partially
	2.2 Orientation and facilitation of research	Publication of research and science bulletins	2 (0)	Performance 2013: 2 Performance 2012: 1	Achieved
	2.3 Ensuring forums for debate, sharing of research findings between senior practitioners & researchers	Number of participants at research conferences	100 (200)	Performance 2013: 126 Performance 2012: 120	Partially
	2.4 Foundation and maintenance of European database of law enforcement	Number of researchers in the database	100 (200)	Performance 2013: 46* Performance 2012: N/A (launched in 2013)	Not achieved
	2.5 Communities and individuals with outstanding performance	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Goal 3. External relations will be considered and dealt with as the corner	3.1 Cooperation with EU agencies and bodies remains the priority	Implementation of JHA Scorecard	95%	Progress 2013: 85% Performance 2012: 70%	Not achieved
	3.2 Associated states are considered the closest partners	Number of participants from associated countries at CEPOL activities	1% (5%)	Performance 2013: 2% Performance 2012: 2%	Partially

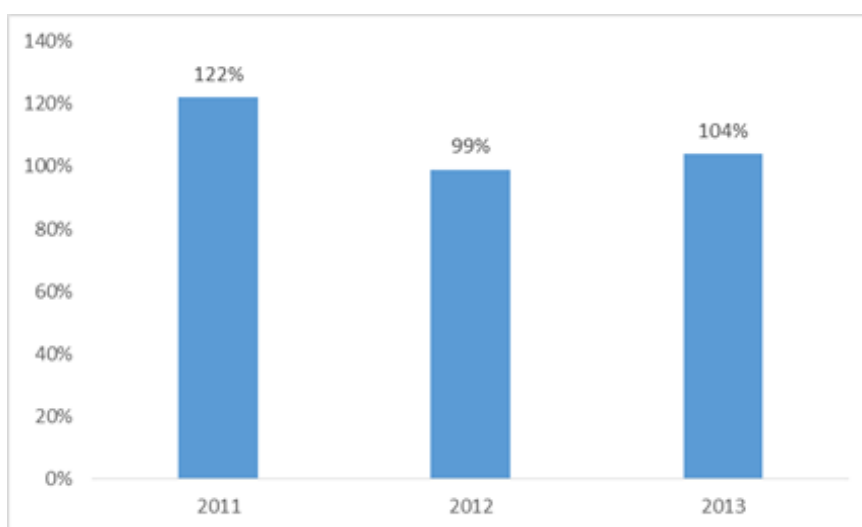
Goal	Strategic Objective	Indicator	2013 Target Value (2012 Target)	Achieved?	
stone of partnerships	3.3 Assisting candidate and accession countries, neighbourhood policy countries and the Eastern Partnerships (EaP)	Number of participants from candidate, accession and neighbourhood countries at CEPOL activities	1% (5%)	Performance 2013: 2% Performance 2012: 2%	Partially
	3.4 Cooperation with globally significant partners	Number of strategic partnership initiatives launched	4	Performance 2013: 4 Performance 2012: 4	Achieved
	3.5 Broadening cooperation with civil society	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Goal 4: CEPOL will be lead and managed as a top-ranking innovative EU agency	4.1 Application of corporate leadership and management by the GB	Draft GB Decisions resulting in adopted GB Decisions	90% (85%)	Performance 2013: 100% Performance 2012: 100%	Achieved
	4.2 Application of devolved leadership and management	Implementation of plans	90%	Performance 2013: 94% Performance 2012: 87%	Partially
	4.3 Effective internal control system	Implementation of Internal Control Plan	100%	Performance 2013: 92%* Performance 2012: 88%	Not achieved
	4.4 Managing human resources	Implementation of the Establishment Plan	95%	Performance 2013: 92% Performance 2012: 84%	Not achieved
		Number of staff evaluated (annual appraisal)	100%	Performance 2013: 100% Performance 2012: 89%	Partially
		Staff satisfaction (annual survey)	80%	survey rescheduled to 2014 Performance 2012: N/A	N/A
	4.5 Budget management	Timely payment of invoices	85%	Performance 2013: 87% Performance 2012: 85%	Achieved
		Consumption of annual budget	Title 1: 95% Title 2: 95% Title 3: 80%	Performance 2013: Title 1: 96%, Title 2: 92%, Title 3: 94 % Performance 2012: Title 1: 99%, Title 2: 98%, Title 3: 86 % (Total: 92%)	Achieved
	4.6 appropriate administrative support	Number of complaints/compliments received	20/30	1/?	N/A
	4.7 Stakeholder relations and internal communication	Implementation of stakeholder-related activities	100%	N/A	N/A
	4.8 Public relations and cooperation with civil society	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Were the activities planned overall implemented in practice?

From the 2012 study, the review of the outputs delivered to external users/beneficiaries of CEPOL activities suggest that, before 2011, the expected outputs in quantitative terms were generally delivered, albeit with some delays.

The following figures report on the implementation of CEPOL planned activities against the plan over the evaluation period. Evidence showed that the delays identified in the previous evaluation period have been overcome. Also, the share of activities implemented (against the work programme activities) was reported to be between 122% and 99% in the period under observation (see figure below).

Figure 2.16 Implementation of planned activities (against Annual Work Programme)



2.4.2 Extent to which CEPOL effectively implemented its activities

This section of the report first provides an assessment of the effectiveness of training and learning activities implemented by CEPOL, and secondly looks at the EPEP. The aspects explored in the following sub-sections include considerations on:

- The reach and appropriateness of the target group;
- The overall satisfaction of participants;
- The usefulness of activities and the uptake of learning;
- The critical factors enabling the effective implementation of activities;
- The obstacles inhibiting the effective implementation of activities; and
- The role of national actors in the development of activities on the ground.

2.4.2.1 Training and learning activities

What is the total number of participants in learning and training activities over the past five years? Do major differences in the participation rates across the Member States exist? Do differences in the participation rates across activities exist? What are the reasons for that (for example, lack of “attractiveness” of training, low visibility, language, practical obstacles, etc.)?

Were the relevant/appropriate target audiences reached?

To what extent did participants find the learning and training activities to be high quality? What was the participants’ satisfaction with regard to: the organisation of the activity overall; the quality of content; the quality of the trainers; key training benefits.

How has the participants’ satisfaction on the key training parameters evolved over the last five years?

To what extent have CEPOL activities been beneficial for performance and/or actually been applied at work? Following attendance in CEPOL activities, to what extent was knowledge shared with colleagues? How is cascading of knowledge usually undertaken? What are the obstacles to this process?

What were the main critical successful factors (internal and external), which contributed to the effective implementation of CEPOL's learning and training activities? What were the main obstacles encountered in the implementation of learning and training activities? Did such obstacles have a serious impact on the achievements of the learning and training activities?

What is the role of NPCs, FPs and national CEPOL components in the delivery of learning and training activities?

What is the total number of participants in learning and training activities over the past five years? Do major differences in the participation rates across Member States exist? Do differences in the participation rates across activities exist? What are the reasons for that (for example, lack of "attractiveness" of training, low visibility, language, practical obstacles, etc.)? Were the relevant/appropriate target audiences reached?

Between 2011 and 2014, CEPOL implemented a wide range of learning and training activities covering different thematic areas. The table below provides an overview of all learning and training activities implemented (including residential activities – i.e. courses, seminars, conferences – as well as other forms of learning such as webinars and e-learning as well as research and science activities), including the number of activities implemented and the number of participants.

Table 2.6 CEPOL learning and training activities 2011–2014

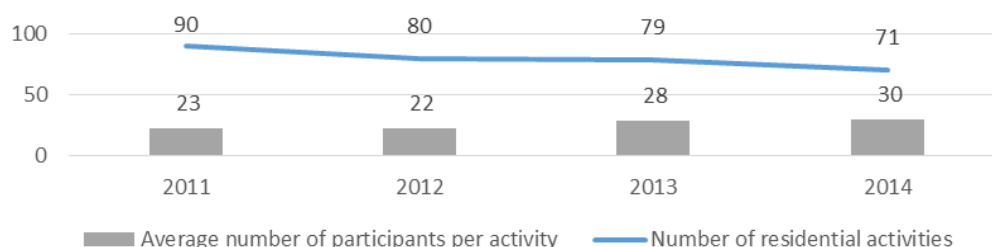
Year	Activity	Number	Participants
2011	Courses, seminars and conferences	88 courses and seminars implemented 2 conferences held	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2,043 participants in courses and seminars ■ 140 participants in conferences
	Webinars	18 webinars held	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 398 participants in webinars
	E-learning	6 e-learning modules launched	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1,765 users visited the online modules
	Research and science activities	1 conference held	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 70 participants attended the conference
2012	Courses, seminars and conferences	59 courses, 16 seminars and 5 conferences held	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1,387 participants in courses ■ 392 participants in seminars ■ 251 participants attended the conferences
	Webinars	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1,671 participants in webinars
	E-learning	12 online modules available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1,961 users visited the online modules
	Research and science activities	1 seminar, 1 conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 12 participants in seminar ■ 58 participants attended the conference
2013	Courses, seminars and conferences	CEPOL implemented 67 courses, 11 seminars and 1 conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1,769 participants in courses ■ 352 participants in seminars ■ 64 participants attended the conference
	Webinars	31 webinars implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 3,562 participants in webinars
	E-learning	19 online modules available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1,994 users visited the online

Year	Activity	Number	Participants
			modules
	Research and science activities	2 R&S activities implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22 participants in the symposium workshop 126 participants attended the conference
2014	Courses, seminars and conferences	71 residential activities (courses, seminars and conferences)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2,098 participants
	Webinars	54 webinars implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5,399 participants in webinars
	E-learning	23 online modules available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2,513 users visited the online modules
	Research and science activities	2 R&S activities implemented	N/A

Sources: Annual Reports 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014

In terms of **reach of learning and training activities**, the 2012 study and former five-year evaluation noted that 413 CEPOL residential activities (courses, seminars and conferences), were organised in the period 2006–2010, reaching around 9.6 thousand participants. In comparison, in the period 2011–2014, CEPOL implemented a total of 320 residential activities (courses, seminars and conferences) reaching a total of 8.2 thousand participants. The figures also indicated that, while fewer activities were implemented throughout the evaluation period, the latter attracted a relatively higher number of participants (on average).

Figure 2.17 Number of residential activities and average number of participants per activity, 2011–2014



Source: Annual Reports 2011–2014

A higher participation in residential courses and activities is also confirmed by the fact that the variation between the number of planned participants and the number of actual participants reduced substantially over the evaluation period (from an average of -3.25 participants in 2011 to an average of -0.25 in 2014)⁴¹. With regard to participation rates, it also seems that in the years 2011–2012, some problems were encountered in attracting participants to conferences while such problems were most often encountered for courses in the years 2013–2014.

When looking at the topics of activities that encountered difficulties in attracting participants, they mainly covered very specific themes (like, for example, Ebola or football security) or techniques (dog handling, homicide investigations, etc.). However, difficulties were also encountered with regard to activities focusing on cooperation with third countries (for example, West Africa and European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) countries) as well as

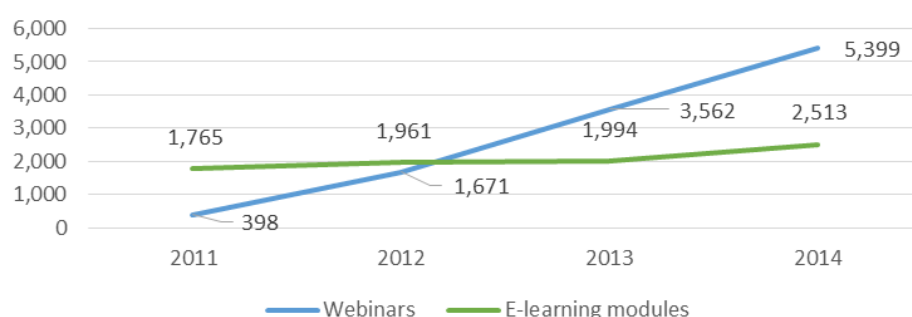
⁴¹ This was calculated on the basis of grant agreement information provided by CEPOL. Both courses and conferences were included in the calculation

topics, which were identified as priority areas (see section 2.2 above) such as counterterrorism awareness and the EU policy cycle.

The evaluation overall showed that issues in attracting potential participants to residential training activities (which were pointed out by previous evaluations) seem to have been broadly overcome in the evaluation period. This is also linked to the fact that CEPOL's visibility across the EU was reported to have increased in recent years. More importantly, survey results indicate (as further elaborated below) that the attendance at CEPOL courses increasingly impacts on the career development of participants, thus further increasing the attractiveness of the training.

In addition to better participation rates on residential courses, during the evaluation period, CEPOL also improved its reach through the development of e-learning tools. Figure 2.18 below shows the exponential increase of participants in CEPOL's webinars and e-learning modules. In total, 11,030 participants were reached through webinars and 8,233 participants were reached through e-learning modules.

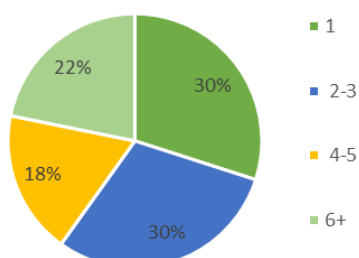
Figure 2.18 Number of webinar and e-learning module participants (2011–2014)



Source: Annual Reports 2011–2014

According to the 2010 Five-Year Evaluation, the cumulative reach of training, by the end of 2009, had involved 1.6% of the senior EU police population. In 2011 and 2012, CEPOL through its training and learning activities, reached between 0.2% and 0.3% of the entire law enforcement population⁴². Residential activities (courses, seminars and conferences) alone reached around 0.1% of the entire law enforcement population. However, there is some double-counting as many participating law enforcement officials are “repeat” participants, as shown in Figure 2.19 below, with 60% indicating that they have participated in between one and three learning activities.

Figure 2.19 In how many CEPOL learning activities have you participated?



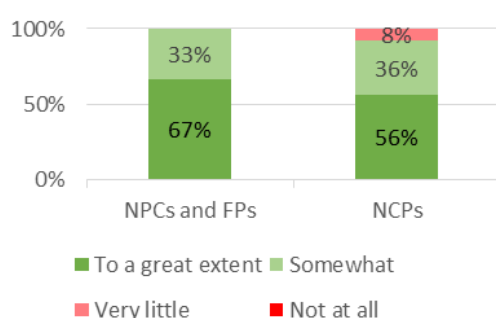
Source: Participants survey, 2015; N=197

⁴² Only data on the total law enforcement population is available on Eurostat. No breakdown per rank is provided. Furthermore, data on total law enforcement population is available only for the years 2011 and 2012

Evidence collected shows that, overall, the **relevant/appropriate target audiences** were reached by CEPOL, although issues in relation to the appropriateness of the current target group (as mentioned in Council Decision 2005/681/JHA,) were pointed out by the stakeholders consulted.

Most stakeholders surveyed agreed that the relevant target audience was reached by CEPOL learning and training activities (see figure below). The NPCs and FPs were more positive than NCPs, with 67% of respondents indicating that the relevant target audience was reached to a great extent in comparison to 56% of NCPs.

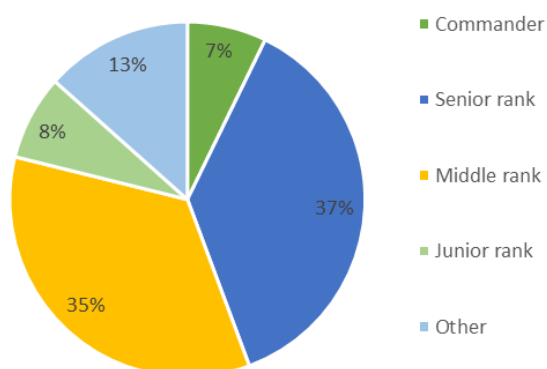
Figure 2.20 In your view, to what extent was, in your view, the relevant/appropriate target audience reached by CEPOL learning and training activities?



Source: NPC and FP survey, NCP survey 2015; $N_{NPC/FP}=12$, $N_{NCP}=25$

Although according to Council Decision 2005/681/JHA, only senior officials are “formally” eligible to participate in CEPOL’s activities, the ICF survey shows that other levels, in particular middle-rank (35% of survey respondents) and also junior-rank officials (8% of respondents) participated, confirming the findings of the 2012 study.

Figure 2.21 Seniority of participants in CEPOL activities



Source: Participants survey, 2015; $N=196$

This, however, happens in particular through the online learning opportunities offered by CEPOL. For example, 69% of junior-rank participants and 57% of middle-rank participants surveyed participated in webinars compared with 49% of senior-rank officers. Similarly, 25% of junior-rank participants surveyed completed e-learning modules compared with 15% of senior-rank officers.

The participation of junior- and middle-rank officials to (some in particular of) CEPOL activities confirms the timeliness of the expansion of the target group, as envisaged in the new CEPOL’s legal basis.

Concerning the **background of participants**, the 2012 study indicated that training participants are often quite diverse in terms of their experience and thematic focus covered. In order to optimise exchange, cooperation and group work among participants, further efforts are needed to select participants with more similar backgrounds. This was also pointed out during the consultation undertaken in the context of this study. As a GB member put it “the courses should be more targeted to a specific audience to improve their effectiveness and impact. People would need to specify their rank prior [to the course] and the selection process would need to take this information into account in order to make the content of the courses more tailored to the level of the participant. This is currently done in the context of the EPEP”.

Survey respondents also pointed out that there would be a need to:

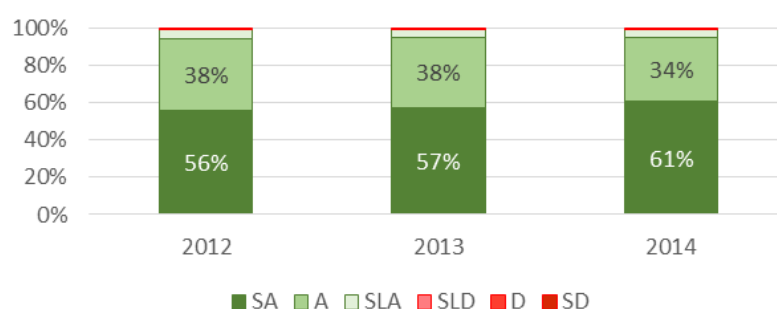
- Improve the selection process of participants to ensure that applicants meet the minimum requirements of the learning activity;
- Improve coordination between law enforcement institutions with regard to the selection process.

Finally, focus groups and workshop participants also agreed with the importance of improving the selection process of participants. Member States (sending organisations) could invest further resources in screening the applicants to ensure that the participants meet the profile described in the agenda.

To what extent did participants in learning and training activities find them to be of high quality? What was the participants’ satisfaction with regard to: the organisation of the activity overall, the quality of content, the quality of the trainers, and the key training benefits. How has the participants’ satisfaction on the key training parameters evolved over the last five years?

Evidence collected demonstrates that participants in learning and training activities found the latter to be high quality and their satisfaction with key training elements (like the organisation of the course, content, methods used, etc.) has remained very high throughout the evaluation period. The overall satisfaction rate with regard to course/seminar attended slightly increased over the evaluation period (see figure below). The share of those who were very satisfied increased from 56% in 2012 to 61% in 2014.

Figure 2.22 Overall satisfaction with the course/seminar as a whole (2012–2014)



Source: CEPOL Participants Course Seminar Survey, 2011–2014; $N_{2012}=1,623$; $N_{2013}=1,792$; $N_{2014}=1,870$

CEPOL survey results also show that the majority (96–98%) of participants were satisfied with the **organisation of the courses** attended (see Figure 3 in the Annex). The level of satisfaction remained stable during the period under consideration.

Participants also seemed to be satisfied overall with the **content of the learning and training activities** attended (between 92% and 94% of surveyed participants agreed or strongly agreed with this statement). In 2014, the share of respondents who strongly agreed

with the statement that the content of the activities attended was up to date, was the highest (39%) while only 2% of participants somewhat disagreed (see Figure 4 in the Annex). An overall improvement can also be seen in comparison to the data gathered in previous evaluations, where the satisfaction rate for the content was around 85%.

Moreover, according to CEPOL surveys, the **materials and handouts** presented during training and learning activities were considered useful and helpful for learning by almost 90% of participants in the period 2012–2014. The satisfaction rate has increased since 2012 as the share of participants somewhat disagreeing decreased from 4% in 2012 to 2% in 2013 and 2014 (see Figure 5 in the Annex).

The satisfaction with the trainers' work is also high amongst participants according to CEPOL survey data (see Figure 6 in the Annex). Whilst those who strongly agreed that the **methods and style adopted by trainers** helped them to learn increased from 44% in 2012 to 48% in 2014, the share of those somewhat disagreeing increased by 1% in comparison with 2013, although still remaining quite marginal (3% in 2014). In comparison to data presented in the evaluation carried out in 2012, the satisfaction rate with experts/trainers has remained stable. However, it is not entirely clear whether recommendations on teaching approaches (which were often reported as relatively traditional, too theoretical and not sufficiently focused on exchange and practical experiences/examples) have been taken into account. The consultation carried out in the context of this assignment also showed that one GB member was concerned the training methods used. According to this interviewee, "the methods used are too traditional. Criteria linked to creativity and innovation could be introduced as part of the application process to improve this weakness".

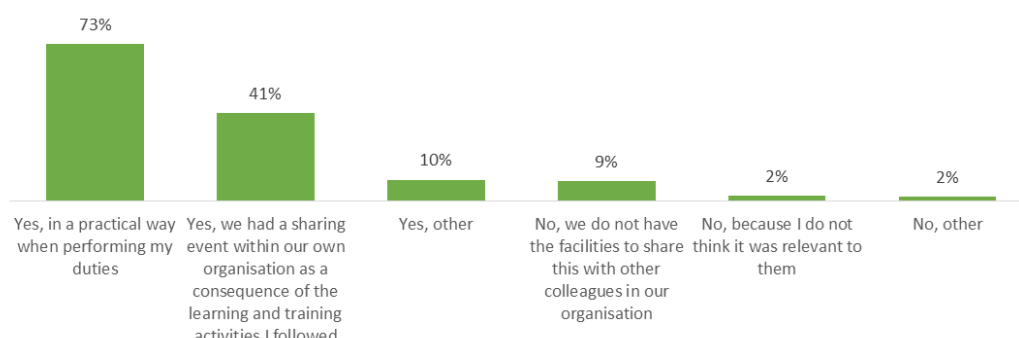
Finally, more than half the participants were very satisfied with the **language** skills of the trainers. In total 97–99% of participants agreed that the language was at a level suitable for them (see the Annex, Figure A1.7).

To what extent have CEPOL activities been beneficial for performance and/or actually been applied at work? Following attendance in CEPOL activities, to what extent was knowledge shared with colleagues? How is cascading of knowledge usually undertaken? What are the obstacles to this process?

CEPOL activities were reported to be beneficial for the performance of participants and, overall, the newly gained skills seem to have been actually applied at work for the benefit of law enforcement organisations. Some minor issues were, however, encountered with the sharing/cascading of knowledge. Stakeholders called for a more thorough approach to sharing/cascading of knowledge as well as for an increased monitoring from national actors with regard to in the effects of participation in CEPOL activities.

ICF survey results suggest that CEPOL activities have been beneficial for performance and applied at work by the majority of participants (see figure below). In fact, 73% of participants said that the knowledge gained had been applied in a practical way when performing their duties. Participation has also been beneficial to colleagues, as two fifths of participants were able to share their knowledge within their organisation following participation in CEPOL activities.

Figure 2.23 Have you been able to share the knowledge gained with other colleagues/organisations/institutions?



Source: Participants survey 2015; N= 165

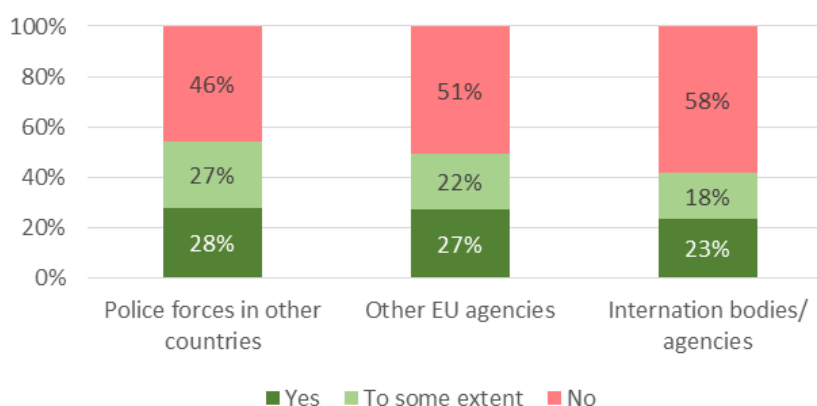
Similarly, the majority of surveyed LMs indicated that all colleagues who participated in CEPOL activities were somehow able to share the knowledge gained.

While positive results concerning the uptake of learning and the cascading of knowledge were gathered through the surveys, interviews with GB members also identified some weaknesses in this regard. Some interviewees pointed out that the cascading process could be improved and better monitored by national stakeholders involved in the organisation of CEPOL activities: “The new legal basis will broaden the reach of CEPOL and it will be impossible to train all police forces. Improving the cascading effect will be therefore crucial in this regard”.

Survey results also indicated that participating in CEPOL learning and training activities opened participants and their colleagues to new learning experiences. In fact, 67% of LMs indicated that following their colleagues’ participation in CEPOL training, they have also engaged in similar activities. The survey conducted with participants indicated that, for half of them, the training has led to subsequent participation in either national training (50%) and/or international training (51%).

Participants also noted other benefits linked to participation in CEPOL training activities. For example, for around half the participants CEPOL activities led to further networking or cooperation with police forces in other countries (55%) and other EU agencies (49%). Such cooperation and/or networking with police forces is ongoing for most participants (94%).

Figure 2.24 Has participation in CEPOL activities led you to engage in further networking or cooperation with:

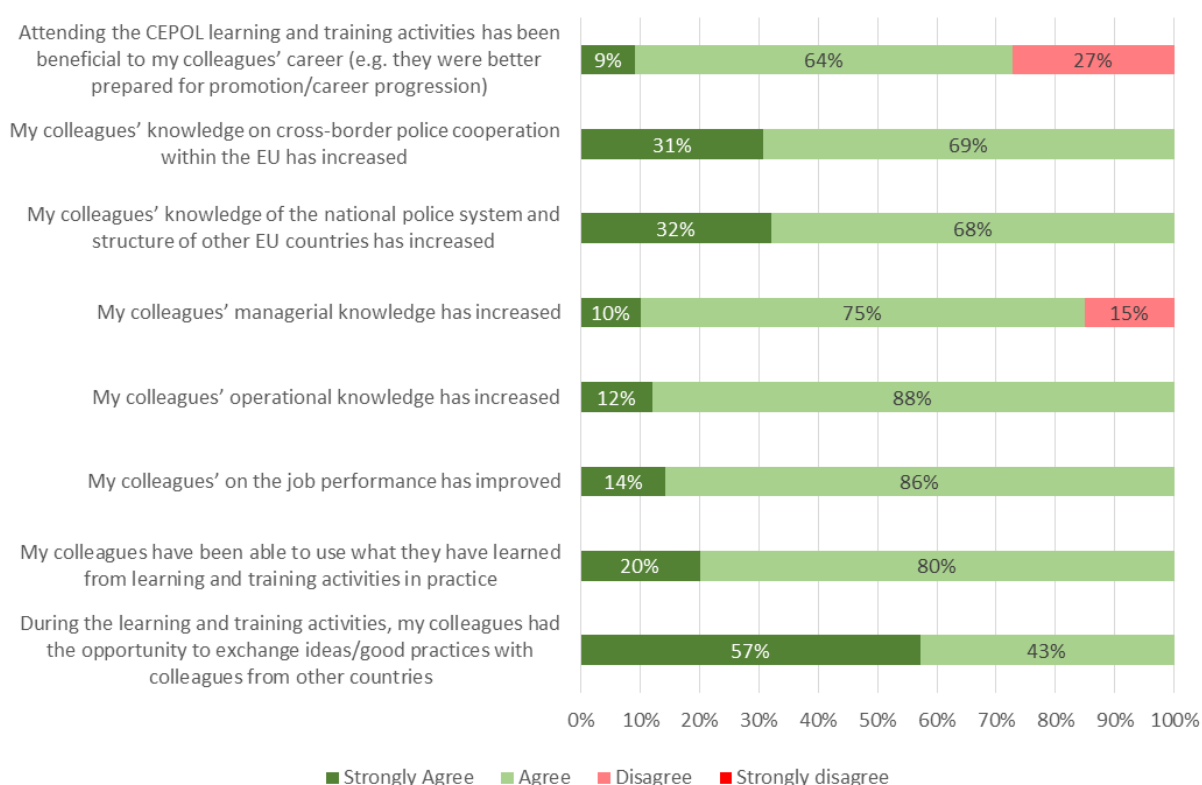


Source: CEPOL Participants Course Seminar Survey, 2011–2014; N₂₀₁₁=NI; N₂₀₁₂=1,623; N₂₀₁₃=1,792; N₂₀₁₄=1,870

The benefits linked to the participation in CEPOL training activities are also extended to the organisation where the participants work. More than 70% of LMs surveyed indicated that participation in CEPOL training activities led to an increased networking and cooperation (of the organisation) with police forces in other countries and other EU agencies. Also, 60% of LMs pointed out that attendance in learning activities led to networking and cooperation with international bodies/agencies. In all cases, the cooperation and networking with police forces was reported as ongoing.

With regard to the benefits linked to the participation in CEPOL training activities, LMs also strongly agreed that CEPOL activities were a good opportunity for police officers attending such activities to exchange ideas and good practices with colleagues from other countries (57% strongly agreed). All LMs agreed that their colleagues' knowledge of national police systems and structures of other EU countries, as well as on cross-border police cooperation within the EU, had increased. All LMs also agreed that the operational knowledge of their colleagues increased and improvements in performance on the job were also evident. A slightly smaller percentage of LMs indicated that the managerial knowledge of colleagues had improved following attendance at CEPOL activities (85% agreed and 15% disagreed with this statement). Finally, 73% considered that participation had been beneficial for their colleagues' career.

Figure 2.25 Usefulness of CEPOL activities attended, knowledge of the national police systems and structures of other EU countries and on-the-job performance

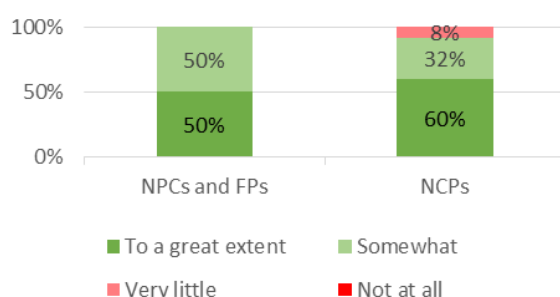


Source: LMs survey 2015, N=20-28

What are the main critical successful factors (internal and external), which contributed to the effective implementation of CEPOL's learning and training activities?

All NPC, FP as well the majority of NCPs surveyed thought that CEPOL activities, overall, are effectively implemented across the EU (see figure below).

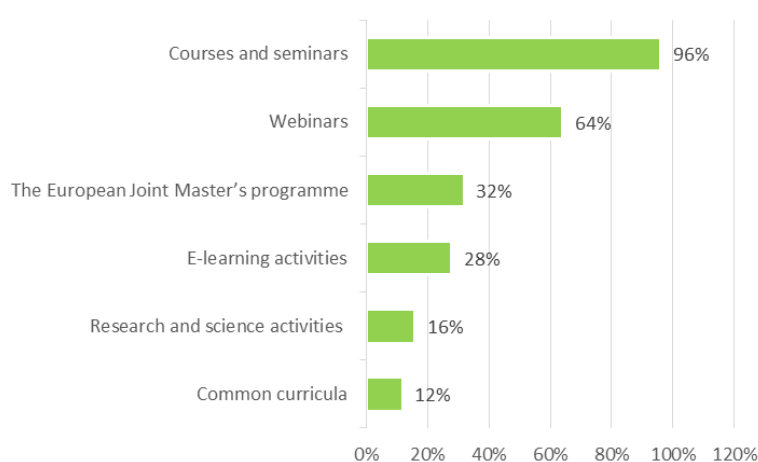
Figure 2.26 In your view, to what extent are, in your view, CEPOL activities overall effectively implemented in your Member State?



Source: NPCs and FPs survey, NCPs survey 2015; $N_{NPC/FP}=12$; $N_{NCP}=25$

Almost all NCPs responding to the survey found courses and seminars particularly effective (96% of respondents). Almost two thirds of respondents also considered webinars to be very effective. Common curricula were considered to be the least effective activities implemented by CEPOL, as shown by the figure below. This might be due to the fact that problems with the “transposition” of common curricula into national practice were encountered in the majority of Member States. According to most GB members interviewed, common curricula developed by CEPOL are not implemented in practice in the Member States. A GB member noted that common curricula “are a grey area of CEPOL as they did not develop as they should have. Only some aspects of the common curricula are extracted and used in the national curricula”. According to another GB member, the limited impact of this tool is linked “to the fact that most training courses at national level are accredited. It is sometimes difficult to include other training classes into streamlined and accredited training classes at national level”. Language barriers also play a role in the scarce uptake of common curricula at national level. This CEPOL activity was also considered to be the least relevant by stakeholders consulted in the context of this evaluation (see section 2.2.3 above).

Figure 2.27 Which, amongst the CEPOL activities, are considered to be particularly effective?



Source: NCPs survey 2015; $N=25$

The limited update of curricula produced by CEPOL in the Member States is confirmed by NPC/FP survey results, which indicated that the content of training activities organised at national level was, to a great extent, made up of national police academy/college material (91% of the surveyed NPC/FP used exclusively national material) whilst CEPOL material is used to a lesser extent (only 50% of the surveyed NPC/FP make regular use of it).

There are a number of critical success factors (internal and external), which contributed to the effective implementation of CEPOL's learning and training activities.

The main success factors cited by the GB members interviewed included the introduction of the grant agreement system, which in their view greatly contributed to raising the quality standards of the training implemented across the EU, although triggering some administrative burden on the applicants, as further explained below.

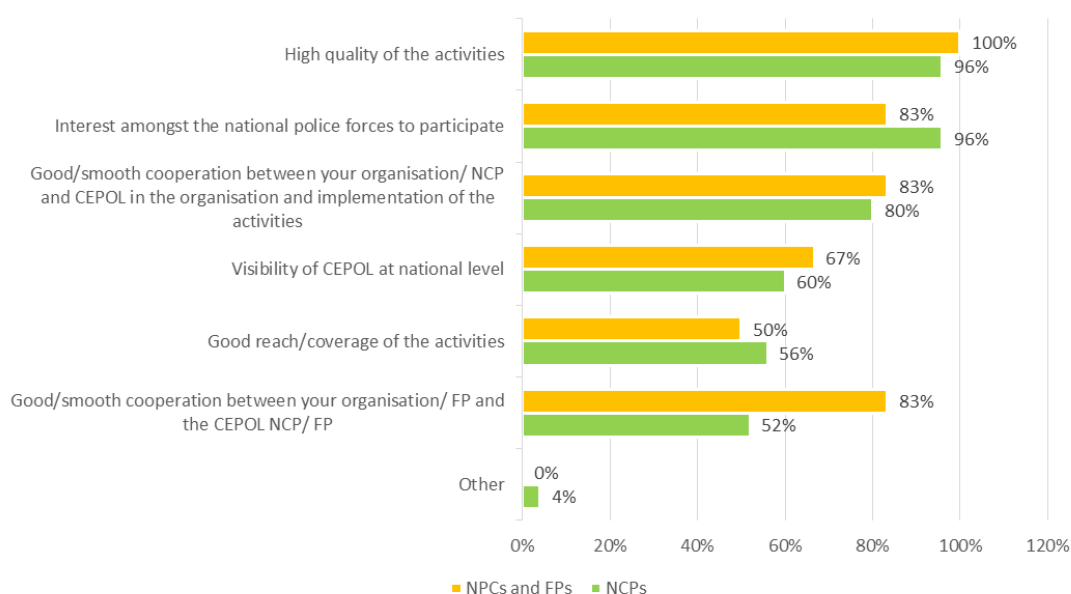
Other factors cited by interviewees included the expertise of trainers as well as the involvement of national experts and EU agencies and institutions in the delivery of training. The creation of a database of experts was indicated as very helpful in the delivery of training activities as it allows selection of the most appropriate trainer or instructor for concrete topics and activities.

The continuous evaluation of CEPOL activities was also cited as a critical success factor to ensuring and improving the quality of activities implemented. The appointment of the internal quality assurance officer was paramount to ensuring the quality focus of CEPOL's activities. In the same fashion, commission audits are considered useful to increase the performance of the activities of CEPOL.

Finally, precise planning and good coordination were also cited. The new participant management application, yet to be launched in 2015, is expected to further contribute to cooperation between the different CEPOL components, as it will support the organisation of courses, meetings and the EPEP. The application will fully automate the communication between course managers, meeting organisers, EPEP participants, NCPs and NECs during the nomination/confirmation process thus reducing the administrative burden on organisers.

In the surveys conducted in the context of this assignment, stakeholders (NPC, FP and NCP) were also asked to indicate the main success factors contributing to the effective implementation of CEPOL's learning and training activities (see figure below). The most important factor cited by both types of stakeholder was the quality of activities and level of interest amongst the national police forces in participating in the activities. For both groups of stakeholders (NPCs and FPs, and NCPs) the cooperation with CEPOL in the organisation and implementation of the activities was ranked as the third most important factor for ensuring an effective implementation.

Figure 2.28 What are the main critical successful factors (internal and external), which contributed to the effective implementation of CEPOL's learning and training activities?



Source: NPCs and FPs survey, NCPs survey 2015; $N_{NPC/FP}=12$; $N_{NCP}=25$

What were the main obstacles encountered in the implementation of learning and training activities? Did such obstacles have a serious impact on the achievements of the learning and training activities?

Some obstacles to the effective delivery of CEPOL learning and training activities were also identified through the reporting period. However, they were not reported to have a serious impact on the achievements of the learning and training activities.

The 2012 study highlighted the existence of the following factors hampering the effective delivery of CEPOL activities. These obstacles mainly related to:

- Member States' commitment to implementing courses and training, which was reported to vary to a great extent;
- Differences in national legislation creating obstacles to the effective organisation of courses and training, participation in such activities by police officers and adoption of the common curricula;
- Low participation rates;
- Lack of coordination of training leading to overlaps in timing of seminars organised in different Member States;
- Insufficient length of training (courses and seminars lasted a maximum of four days); and
- Lack of a clear mandate for some activities – especially research activities.

Evidence collected in the context of this evaluation indicated that most of the obstacles identified in the 2012 study have been overcome. For example, in the period under consideration, participation rates improved as did the overall reach of CEPOL (as explained above). This was mainly due to better participation in residential activities as well as to the development of e-learning modules and webinars. Also, problems linked to overlaps in the timings of seminars organised in different Member States due to a lack of coordination are no longer reported, with stakeholders instead praising the efficient cooperation not only between the Agency and the national components but also between the Member States (horizontally), as further elaborated below. Issues related to variations in Member States' commitment in implementing courses and training were identified only to a very limited extent.

However, stakeholders pointed out that the number of activities implemented by the Member States is still unbalanced. In some Member States, hardly any CEPOL courses are organised due to the lack of capacity/resources or, according to one GB member, the reluctance of stakeholders to participate in the implementation of CEPOL activities. This was confirmed by survey data which indicated that the main obstacles to the effective implementation of activities were linked to insufficient human and financial resources at national level (as indicated by 65% and 47% of NCPs respectively). A lack of interest from national authorities in implementing learning and training activities organised in the context of CEPOL was also cited by around 40% of the surveyed NCPs, NPCs and FPs. Finally, during the focus groups, participants also noted that the countries expressing an interest in hosting/organising learning activities would not always receive a grant. This could explain the low number of CEPOL activities organised in these countries.

When looking at the number of courses organised over the evaluation period by Member States (see Table 2.7 below), France, Portugal, the UK, Germany, Italy and Spain organised the highest number of activities. However, when comparing this to the size of the country (and the total police population), the most active countries were Finland, Ireland, Sweden and Portugal. On the other hand, the table also shows that some medium-size Member States struggled (at least in some years) to organise activities. This was the case, for example, for Poland and the Netherlands (in 2012). The capacity problems cited above might be the cause of this.

Table 2.7 Number of activities organised/hosted per country 2011–2014

	Number of activities organised/hosted			
	2011	2012	2013	2014
Austria	4	3	3	2
Belgium	3	1	1	2
Bulgaria	2	0	0	0
Croatia	0	0	0	2
Cyprus	1	2	1	0
The Czech Republic	2	1	2	1
Denmark	1	0	0	0
Estonia	1	2	0	3
Finland	1	3	5	5
France	9	9	3	8
Germany	7	6	4	5
Greece	3	2	2	2
Hungary	0	2	1	2
Ireland	5	3	4	2
Italy	5	4	5	5
Latvia	2	2	1	0
Lithuania	4	1	2	2
Malta	1	1	0	0
The Netherlands	2	1	2	2
Poland	3	1	3	2
Portugal	5	5	7	6
Romania	1	1	3	2
Slovakia	2	2	1	2
Slovenia	2	2	0	1
Spain	4	4	5	6
Sweden	4	2	4	4
The United Kingdom	8	7	3	5

Source: Grant agreement information

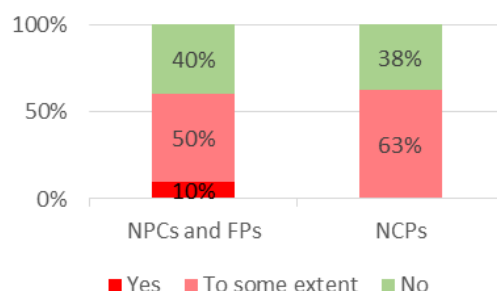
As mentioned above, problems with the adoption of common curricula were also still flagged by the stakeholders, caused by practical difficulties in integrating the common curricula into the national curricula and an overall reluctance of national actors to change existing practice.

Other suggestions for improving the effective delivery of learning and training activities, identified in the context of this evaluation, were linked to the database of trainers/experts. While the tool is considered a success factor in the delivery of activities, some improvements could be made to render the tool more functional, in terms of its technical features and the selection of experts included in the database. It was also suggested to include an evaluative component (i.e. experts should be regularly evaluated and feedback included in the database).

Survey results also provided more information on the “stage” when such obstacles are most often encountered. For FPs these obstacles are most often encountered when organising the learning/training activity (70% of respondents had encountered obstacles at this stage) whilst for NCPs obstacles are usually encountered during the implementation of the

learning/training activity (61%), when organising the activity (57%) and when developing the content of the activity (39%). Unfortunately, according to more than 60% of the respondents, these obstacles somewhat affected the achievements of the learning activities, as shown in Figure 2.29 below.

Figure 2.29 Did such obstacles have a serious impact on the achievements of the learning and training activities?



Source: NPCs and FPs survey, NCPs survey 2015; $N_{NPC/FP}=10$; $N_{NCP}=24$

What role do national police colleges, framework partners and national CEPOL components play in the delivery of learning and training activities? To what extent are cooperation arrangements effective?

As further explained in section 2.7 below, CEPOL's structure can be considered as peculiar when compared with other JHA agencies. CEPOL was in fact initially set up as a network and still continues to have a very strong national character. National CEPOL components and FPs therefore play a vital role in the delivery of training and learning activities.

Survey data shows that the main tasks undertaken by NPCs/FPs as well as NCPs varies among Member States, with some of them being more active compared to others. As indicated by the NCP survey, for example, in Denmark only four activities out of 14⁴³ are carried out, whilst in other countries (such as Finland, Greece, Poland and Malta), all 14 activities are regularly undertaken.

The most common activities carried out by NCPs are (see Figure 16 in the Annex):

- Support national E-Net managers, national research and science correspondents, national common curricula coordinators and any relevant actors, part of the NCPs (96%); and
- Organise and coordinate appropriate nominations of participants (i.e. identification and enrolment) for activities at the national level (92%).

Activities carried out by almost all NPCs and FPs surveyed (see Figure 8 in the Annex) are:

⁴³ 1. Contribute to the preparation of decisions of the GB in cooperation with CEPOL's components; 2. Ensure CEPOL's effective communication and cooperation with all relevant training institutes, including relevant research institutes within the Member States; 3. Contribute to drafting the CEPOL's work programmes and budget; 4. Contribute to and promote CEPOL's website; 5. Identify current and future national training needs; 6. Choose the topics to be covered by CEPOL's learning and training courses; 7. Choose the content of the exchanges organised under EPEP; 8. Deliver CEPOL's learning and training courses/other activities in your Member State; 9. Organise and coordinate appropriate nominations of participants (i.e. identification and enrolment) for activities at the national level; 10. Facilitate the cascading of the knowledge gained through the participation in CEPOL's training courses and other activities to a broader audience; 11. Support national E-Net managers, national research and science correspondents, national common curricula coordinators and any relevant actors, part of the NCPs; 12. Contribute to the compilation of strategic documents (e.g. meeting documents, course materials etc.); 13. Collect and disseminate information to all relevant target audiences in the Member States; 14. Promote CEPOL and provide information about CEPOL to relevant stakeholders

- Organisation and coordination of appropriate nominations of participants (i.e. identification and enrolment) for activities at the national level (83%); and
- Delivering CEPOL's learning and training courses/other activities (83%).

Although stakeholders surveyed undertake a wide range and variety of tasks, there are still some areas where they felt they should be more involved. For example, NPCs and FPs expressed their interest in being more involved in activities related to the identification of current and future national training needs (29%) as well as the promotion of CEPOL and provision of information about CEPOL to relevant stakeholders (29%).

Similarly NCPs also expressed interest in being further involved in the:

- Selection of the topics to be covered by CEPOL's learning and training courses (48%);
- Identification of current and future national training needs (38%); and
- Facilitation of the cascading of the knowledge gained through the participation in CEPOL's training courses and other activities to a broader audience (24%).

2.4.2.2 The EPEP

What is the total number of participants in the EPEP over the past five years? Do major differences in participation rates across the Member States exist? What are the reasons for that (for example, lack of "attractiveness" of the EPEP, low visibility, language, practical obstacles, etc.)? What is the procedure for selecting participants? Is such a procedure effective? Was the appropriate target audience reached?

To what extent did exchange participants find the EPEP to be high quality? What was the participants' satisfaction with regard to: the organisation of the exchange overall (information provided prior to departure, preparation phase, implementation, support provided by coordinators, etc.); the quality of content; key exchange benefits; the preparation and implementation of the cascading plan? How has the participants' satisfaction evolved over the last five years?

To what extent have CEPOL activities been beneficial for performance and/or actually been applied at work? Following attendance at CEPOL activities, to what extent was knowledge shared with colleagues? How is cascading of knowledge usually undertaken? What are the obstacles to this process?

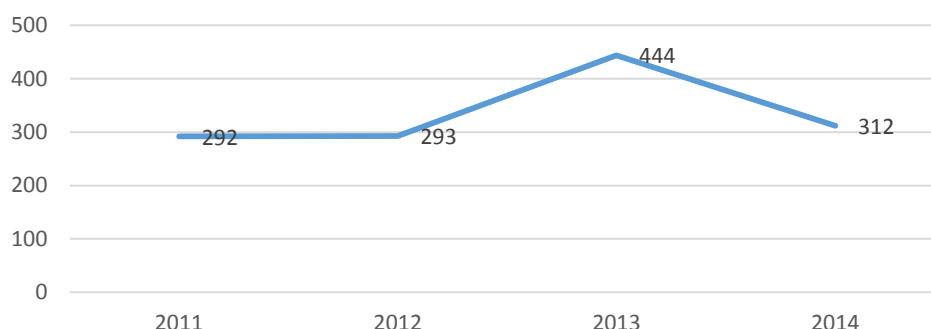
What are the main critical successful factors (internal and external), which contributed to the effective implementation of the EPEP? What were the main obstacles encountered in the implementation of the EPEP? Did such obstacles have a serious impact on the achievements of the EPEP?

What are the main areas for improvement?

What is the role of national authorities and national CEPOL components in the implementation of the EPEP? To what extent do the cooperation arrangements between CEPOL and Member State actors in the implementation of the EPEP work effectively? To what extent does internal communication between CEPOL and Member State actors work effectively (mention the success elements, obstacles, areas for improvement, etc.)?

What is the total number of participants in the EPEP over the past five years? Do major differences in participation rates across the Member States exist? What are the reasons for that (for example, lack of "attractiveness" of the EPEP, low visibility, language, practical obstacles, etc.)? What is the procedure for selecting participants? Is such a procedure effective? Was the appropriate target audience reached?

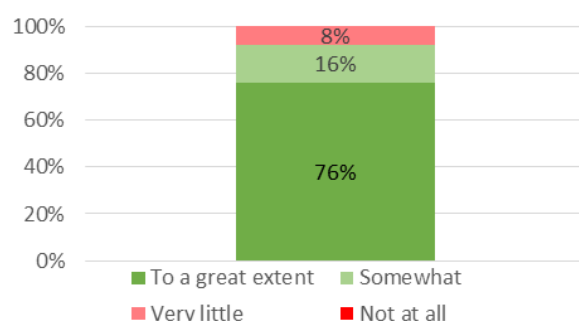
As outlined in the figure below, the number of participants in the EPEP was generally stable over the period 2011–2014, with a peak of exchanges in 2013 (with 444 exchanges completed).

Figure 2.30 Participants in the EEP for the period 2011–2014

Source: Based on the data gathered from CEPOL Annual Reports

With regard to Member State participation, in the period 2011–2014, the number of countries involved in EEP activities increased from 26 participating countries in 2011 to 38 in 2014. Since 2012, the EEP has been extended to EU candidate countries, Eastern Partnership countries and Western Balkan countries, thus extending the reach of exchange activities.

Most NCPs surveyed considered the EEP has been successful in reaching relevant/appropriate target audience (Figure 2.31 below).

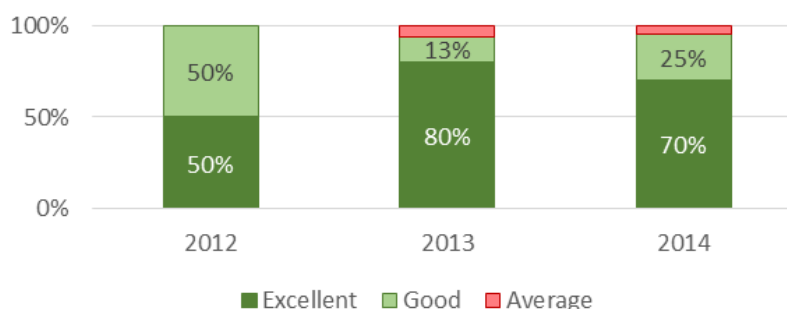
Figure 2.31 In your view, to what extent was= the relevant/appropriate target audience reached by the EEP (in terms of types of police forces covered by the programme)?

Source: NCPs survey 2015; N=25

However, 40% of NCPs, also indicated the “insufficient reach of CEPOL in terms of number of police forces covered by EEP” as an obstacle to the effective delivery of the activities (see Figure 2.40 below). This result could be interpreted in light of the success of the programme, which attracted a growing number of applicants throughout the evaluation period. However, due to the limited capacity of the programme, the number of police forces reached by the exchange activities could not be increased.

To what extent did exchange participants find the EEP to be high quality? What was the participants’ satisfaction with regard to: the organisation of the exchange overall (information provided prior to departure, preparation phase, implementation, support provided by coordinators, etc.); the quality of content; key exchange benefits; the preparation and implementation of the cascading plan. How has the participants’ satisfaction evolved over the last five years?

According to CEPOL survey data, the overall satisfaction with the EEP is generally high amongst the surveyed participants, with 80% rating the programme as excellent in 2013, the year which also saw the highest number of participants. The overall satisfaction rate also remained quite stable throughout the period 2012–2014, although with a very limited increase in respondents who mentioned that their EEP-related experience was “average”.

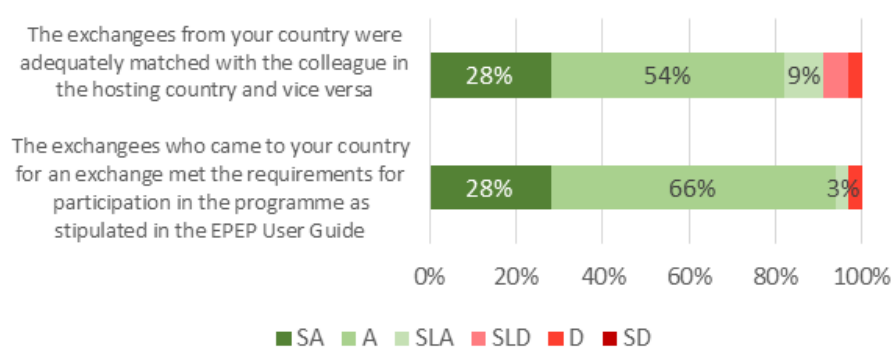
Figure 2.32 Overall Exchange Programme evaluation (2012–2014)

Source: EPEP Participant Survey 2012–2014; $N_{2012}=10$; $N_{2013}=15$; $N_{2014}=20$

In recent years, several elements have been improved, with participants being increasingly satisfied (see Figures 9 and 10 in the Annex) with the information and the level of administrative support provided by the NECs. The majority also agreed that their expectations in terms of professional improvement were met (see Figure 11 in the Annex).

While the majority of participants in 2012 and 2013 agreed with the statement “I found the duration of the EPEP sufficient to fulfil my objectives”, this decreased by 25% in 2014 (see Figure 12 in the Annex). In the ICF survey, the need to change the duration of the exchange was also pointed out by some respondents, who indicated that five days were not sufficient, especially because this also included travelling time.

Finally, while information is not available for every year under consideration, the majority of NECs (91%) participating in the 2014 survey ran by CEPOL somewhat agreed that participants were adequately matched to the hosting structures. Furthermore, 97% of NECs agreed that visiting participants met the requirements for participation in the programme, as stipulated in the EPEP User Guide (see figure below).

Figure 2.33 NECs’ feedback on participants of the EPEP (2014)

Source: CEPOL NECs survey, 2014; $N=35$

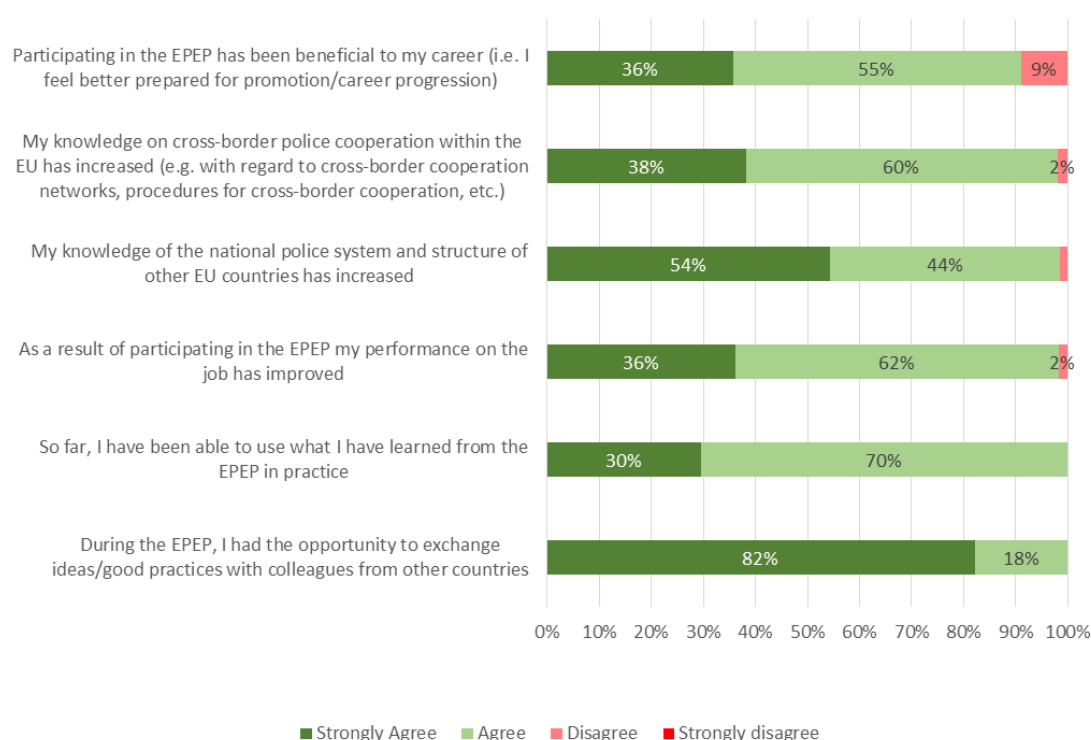
To what extent have CEPOL activities been beneficial for performance and/or actually applied at work? Following attendance in CEPOL activities, to what extent was knowledge shared with colleagues? How is cascading of knowledge usually undertaken? What are the obstacles to this process?

With regard to learning and training activities, the EPEP was reported to be beneficial for the performance of participants: overall, the newly gained skills seem to have been applied at work, leading to benefit for law enforcement organisations. Cascading of knowledge, which is a formal requirement of the programme, was considered as working well in general,

despite some participants indicating that their cascading plans were not entirely implemented upon return.

The participants reported several personal benefits gained by their attendance in the exchange programme (as shown by the figure below). All participants agreed that the EPEP provided an opportunity to exchange ideas and good practices with colleagues from other countries, and the programme has also been beneficial in terms of being able to use their gained knowledge in practice and therefore improve their performance on the job. A significant share of participants (91%) also agreed that participation in the EPEP had been beneficial to their career.

Figure 2.34 Usefulness of the EPEP according to participants

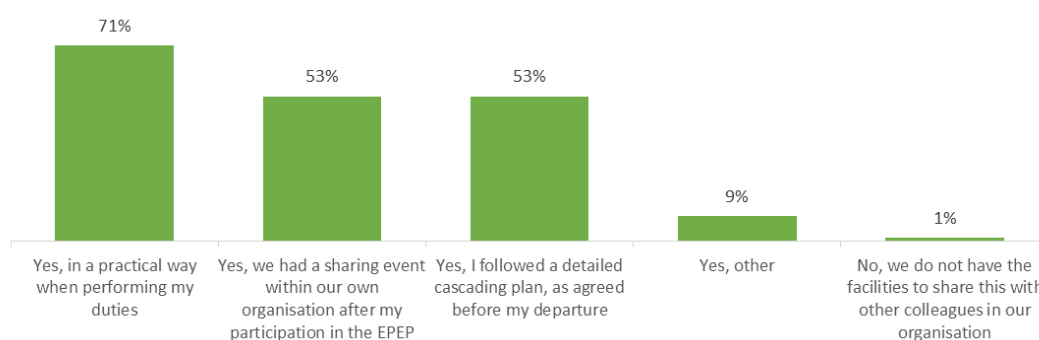


Source: Participants survey 2015; N=55–73

Similar benefits were also seen by the LMs of participants, with 56% of them strongly agreeing that the EPEP provided an opportunity to exchange ideas and good practices with foreign colleagues. They also agreed that their knowledge of the national police systems and structures of other EU countries, and of cross-border police cooperation within the EU, had increased. The LMs also considered, but to a lesser extent compared to participants, that participation in the EPEP was beneficial to the participants' career (29% disagreed with the statement – see Figure 17 in the Annex).

With regard to the **cascading of knowledge gained**, similarly to participants in CEPOL training activities, those taking part in the EPEP reported that they had the opportunity to share the knowledge gained in a practical way when performing their duties (71%) and in a sharing event within the organisation after taking part in the EPEP (53%). More than half the participants also followed the detailed cascading plan that was agreed before departure.

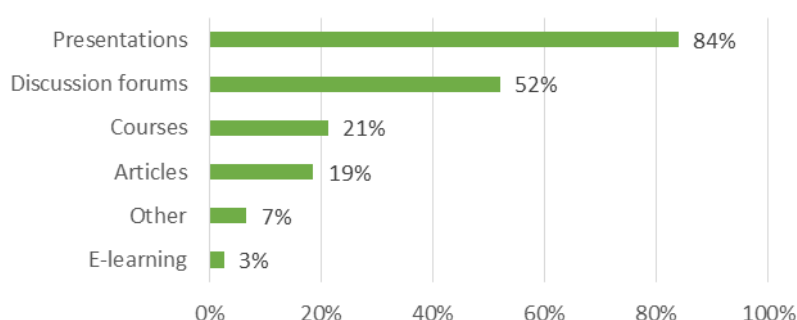
Figure 2.35 Have you been able to share the knowledge you gained during the EPEP with other colleagues/organisations/institutions?



Source: Participants survey 2015; N=76

Most LMs surveyed (79%) also indicated that their colleagues were able to share the knowledge gained in the EPEP with other officers in a practical way when performing their duties. Following attendance in the EPEP, participants implemented their cascading plans, which were most often targeted at the participants' unit (in 92% of the cases). Sometimes, the target audience was also the national police academy (29%) or an even broader audience (20%). Knowledge sharing mostly happened via presentations or during discussion forums as shown below.

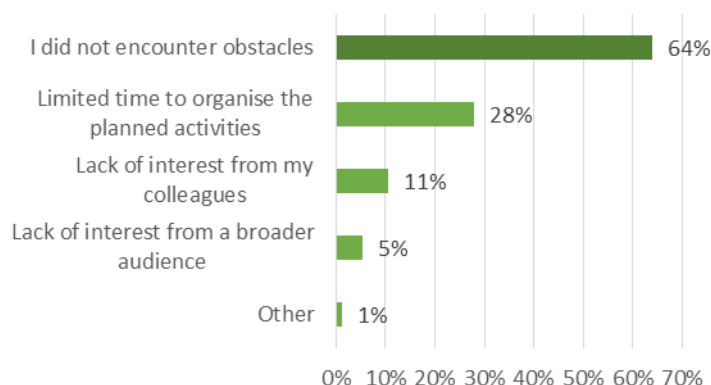
Figure 2.36 The cascading plan included the following dissemination tools/methods



Source: Participants survey 2015; N=75

In addition to efforts at individual level, in order to facilitate the sharing of information gained, some NECs organised follow-up sessions involving EPEP participants (37% of NECs organised such activities, as shown in Figure 13 in the Annex). It is, however, worth noting that not all cascading plans were fully implemented: only 63% of participants indicated they had implemented all activities included in the cascading plan upon their return. On the other hand, some of them (25%) had implemented additional cascading activities after their return, which had not been initially planned. While most of the participants indicated that they did not encounter obstacles in the implementation of the cascading plan, some issues were pointed out in relation to the limited time to implement the plan (28%) and a lack of interest from colleagues (11%).

Figure 2.37 Obstacles encountered in the implementation of the cascading plan

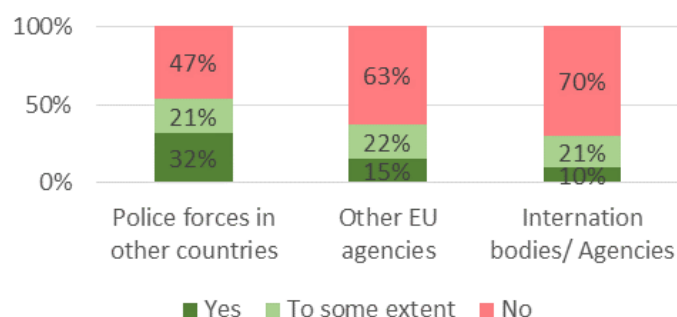


Source: Participants survey 2015; N=75

Survey data shows that participation in the EPEP was slightly less successful than other CEPOL learning and training activities in “opening” participants and their colleagues to new learning experiences. Only around 40% of participants indicated that participation led to further involvement in similar activities (compared to 50% of participants in learning and training activities). However, almost 70% of LMs surveyed indicated that the participation of their colleagues in the EPEP had led them to also engage in the programme.

More than half the participants took the opportunity, following the EPEP experience, to further engage in networking or cooperation with police forces in other countries, and in 53% of cases this cooperation is ongoing. Networking with other EU agencies and international bodies was also triggered following participation in the EPEP, although to a lesser extent.

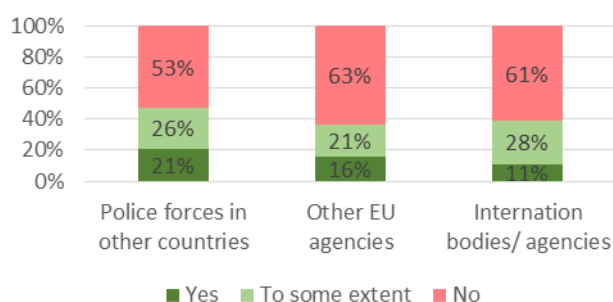
Figure 2.38 Has participation in the EPEP led you to engage in further networking or cooperation with:



Source: Participants survey 2015; N=73–75

The LMs found the participation in EPEP activities beneficial for the organisation as they led to networking with police forces of other Member States, as indicated by 47% of LMs. They all stated that cooperation established with police forces in other countries was ongoing.

Figure 2.39 Has the participation of your colleagues in EPEP led your organisation to engage in further networking or cooperation with:

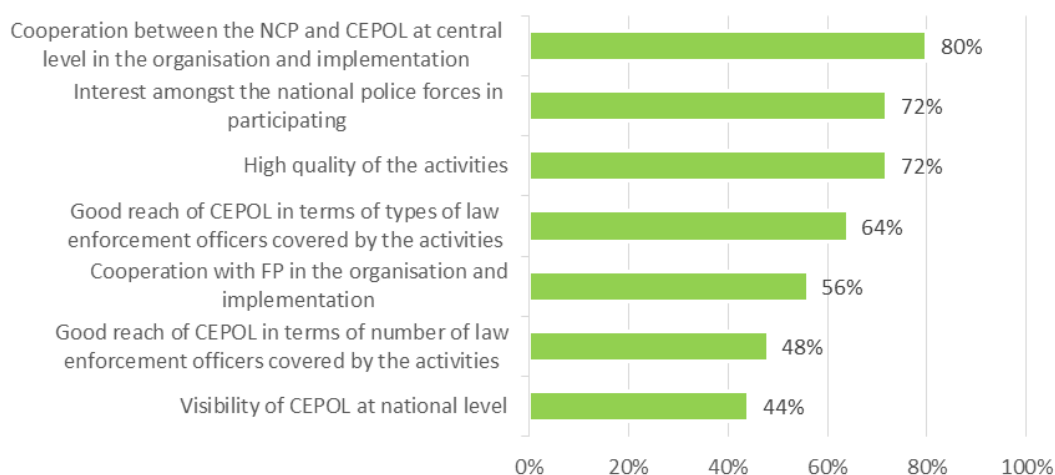


Source: LMs survey 2015; N=30

What are the main critical successful factors (internal and external), which contributed to the effective implementation of the EPEP?

With regard to learning and training activities, evidence shows that, overall, the EPEP was effectively implemented throughout the evaluation period. The main success factors identified by the NCPs participating to the ICF survey related to the cooperation between the NCPs and CEPOL at central level (80%), the growing interest amongst national police forces in participating (72%) and the high quality of the activities (72%). Interviews with GB members also pointed to an increased interest from police forces in the EPEP and the greater visibility of the programme across the EU.

Figure 2.40 What are the main critical success factors (internal and external), which contributed to the effective implementation of the EPEP?



Source: NCPs survey 2015; N=25

What were the main obstacles encountered in the implementation of the EPEP? Did such obstacles have a serious impact on the achievements of the EPEP?

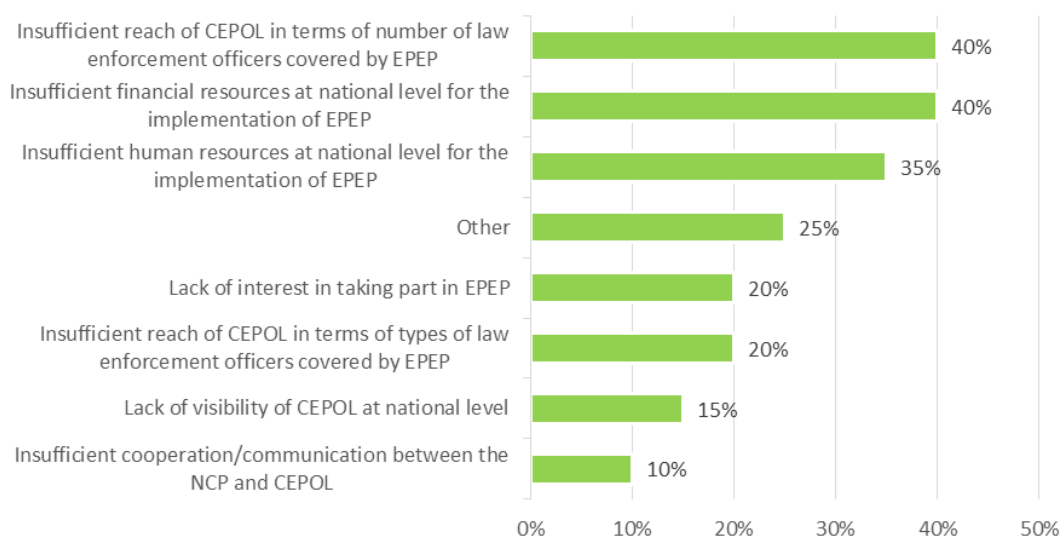
Some obstacles to the effective delivery of the EPEP were identified through the reporting period. However, they were not reported to have had a serious impact on the achievements of the programme.

With regard to the obstacles encountered, the NCPs mentioned the insufficient reach of CEPOL in terms of the number of police forces covered by the EPEP (40%). As mentioned

above, this result could be interpreted in light of the success of the programme, which has attracted a growing number of applicants throughout the evaluation period. However, due to the limited capacity of the programme, it was not possible to increase the number of police forces reached by the exchange activities.

This was again confirmed by survey data, which showed that the lack of financial resources (40%) was the main issue hampering the successful implementation of the programme in the years 2011–2014.

Figure 2.41 What were the main obstacles encountered in the implementation of the EPEP?



Source: NCPs survey 2015; N=20

In terms of possible improvements, GB members called for increased efforts in relation to the matching process. The discussions during the focus group on the EPEP showed that a pre-matching possibility was introduced in 2015 (EPEP applicants can already nominate a matching person for their exchange). While this was reported as improving the matching process (as well as leading to some efficiency gains), some areas for improvement still exist. For example, this system only proves effective if both candidates submit an application. Possible areas for improvement will be discussed in the future at national exchange coordinator meetings.

Moreover, the areas covered by the exchange should be further specified, e.g. by including more information on the specific sub-areas of focus. This would improve not only the relevance of the exchange but also the effectiveness in the matching of participants. Moreover, another GB member suggested a closer and more careful monitoring, by CEPOL, of hosting agreements: “Sometimes the conditions of the exchange are not met in reality, decreasing the effectiveness of the exchange. There is a need to ensure that the plan is implemented in practice. The exchange organisers should be also further supported with regard to the content of the exchange.”

What is the role of national authorities and national CEPOL components in the implementation of the EPEP? To what extent do the cooperation arrangements between CEPOL and Member State actors in the implementation of the EPEP work effectively? To what extent does internal communication between CEPOL and Member State actors work effectively (mention the success elements, obstacles, areas for improvement, etc.)?

At national level, National Exchange Coordinators are responsible for administrative and logistical tasks relating to the EPEP. As shown by Figure 16 in the Annex, 44% of NCPs surveyed responded that they are involved in choosing the content of the exchanges organised under the EPEP. Almost one third of the NCPs (29%) also indicated that they would like to be more involved in this process in the future.

The evidence collected showed that cooperation arrangements between actors at national and Agency level in the context of the EPEP work effectively. The only issues encountered in cooperating and communicating were linked to the lack of capacity, in certain Member States in particular, in relation to the national exchange coordinator (NEC) role (see also section 2.5.1, *Are adequate resources allocated to the national CEPOL functions?*).

2.5 The efficiency of CEPOL

This section assesses the extent to which CEPOL has been delivering its activities and reaching its objectives efficiently

2.5.1 The extent to which CEPOL is cost-efficient overall

This section of the report will provide answers to the questions listed below.

Is the Agency cost-efficient?

What are the human and financial resources available to CEPOL? Are the financial and human resources allocated to CEPOL sufficient to implement its work programmes in line with the political strategy? Could CEPOL achieve the same results with fewer resources? Are adequate resources allocated to the national CEPOL functions (in terms of the number of staff dedicated to CEPOL)?

To what extent has CEPOL been able to deliver its planned activities against the planned budget? Has the efficiency of CEPOL increased or decreased over the past few years?

Have the Agency's operations met the criteria of legality and regularity? Did the recent changes in the structure and governance of CEPOL help to ensure the sound financial management of the Agency? If yes, which changes particularly contributed to this?

What factors have inhibited the efficiency of the Agency over the last past year (for example, related to its structure and management, limited capacity to effectively handle the complexities of the EU's financial and staff regulations, difficulties with both recruiting and maintaining key administrative/management staff over a period of several years, etc.)?

What are the areas for improvement?

Is the Agency cost-efficient?

Overall, the Agency is very cost-efficient. Evidence shows that, over the evaluation period, the implementation of CEPOL's activities and their reach has increased when its financial resources and human resources remained broadly stable. There is a wide consensus amongst the stakeholder consulted on the cost-effectiveness of the services provided by the Agency. The results of the internal audit conducted in 2013 confirmed this view⁴⁴. The cost-

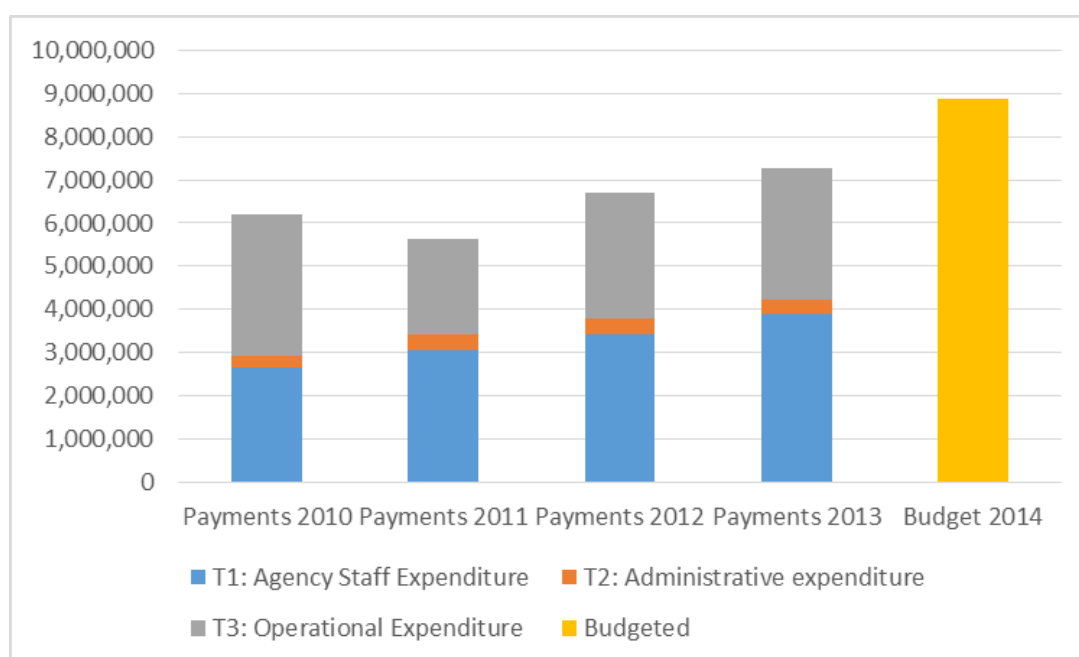
⁴⁴ No critical findings were identified by internal auditors. The auditors' opinion was that the internal control system in place provides reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of the business objectives for CEPOL staff planning and allocation, HR monitoring and reporting, recruitment and selection as well as staff training

efficiency of the Agency is expected to increase from 2015 onwards with the introduction of Activity Based Budgeting and Activity Based Management (ABB/ABM). The experience of other EU decentralised agencies is that ABB and ABM tools help with the planning and prioritisation process of tasks. It is assumed that the introduction of such tools will enable CEPOL to plan and prioritise its activities in a cost-efficient manner, focusing on achieving results with minimum resources.

What are the human and financial resources available to CEPOL? Are the financial and human resources allocated to CEPOL sufficient to implement its work programmes in line with the political strategy? Could CEPOL achieve the same results with fewer resources?

CEPOL budgets and expenditure were around €8.5 million to €6.5 million over the evaluation period. Budget allocations have been broadly stable over the period. Annual expenditure tended to vary according to the amount of non-committed expenditure from one year to another. The figure below summarises the evolution of expenditures (payment out-turns) over the evaluation period.

Figure 2.42 Evolution of the Agency's expenditure over the evaluation period



Source: Interpreted from CEPOL Annual Accounts and Annual Activity Reports

The number of staff employed by the Agency has been broadly stable over the evaluation period. The table below summarises the evolution of CEPOL staffing over the period. It is important to note that the table below does not take into account interim staff employed over the period.

Table 2.8 Evolution of human resources (Agency staff) over the evaluation period

Staff Employed	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Statutory Positions	21	23	26	27	
Permanent AD	0	0	0	0	
Permanent AST	0	0	0	0	
<i>Total permanent</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
Temporary AD	13	13	15	16	

Staff Employed	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Temporary AST	8	10	11	11	
<i>Total temporary</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>26</i>
Non-statutory positions	10	15	14	14	
Contract Agents	6	8	8	8	8
SNE	4	7	6	6	5
Total	31	38	40	41	39

Source: Interpreted from CEPOL Annual Accounts and Annual Activity Reports. Note that the 2014 Annual Activity Report does not report on the detailed breakdown of Agency staff.

Over the evaluation period, efforts were made to optimise resources through the realignment of staff. This resulted in a reduction in the director's staff in 2013 when three members of staff were redeployed to the Learning, Science, Research and Development department to provide better support for the Agency's core business of learning and training. In 2014, due to growing demand for CEPOL's training, the Operations department, and Corporate Services department were reinforced by the allocation of a few extra staff.

There is consensus amongst CEPOL internal and external stakeholders interviewed that the human resources at central level within the Agency are not sufficient to undertake all the tasks entrusted to the Agency. In particular, the human resources in the Corporate Services department (i.e. finance, HR, IT, logistics and communications⁴⁵) are over-utilised in supporting the Agency's activities and have very little time for strategic thinking and forward planning.

Despite the perceived lack of human resources in the Corporate Services department, the Agency's efficiency in implementing its Annual Implementation Plan and in moving the seat of the Agency was praised by the majority of the stakeholders interviewed (especially GB members).

Whilst stakeholders identified budgetary constraints, they regarded CEPOL's overall budget as necessary and sufficient to implement its Annual Work Programme. In other words, they perceived that CEPOL could not have achieved the same results with fewer resources. However, they expressed strong doubts that the level of the budget allocated to CEPOL would be sufficient if the new regulation of the Agency were to be adopted. Similarly, if staff were expected to perform additional duties (i.e. strategic thinking, evaluation of learning outcomes of participants, etc.) and CEPOL's target group broadened, the current staffing levels and financial resources allocated to the Agency would have to be increased.

The Proposal for a Regulation on CEPOL indicates that four full-time equivalents (FTEs) would be needed in order to implement the LETS and an additional FTE should be planned for the post of legal advisor. During the workshop organised in the context of the evaluation, participants highlighted that the legal advisor position would be added in 2016 while two LETS-related posts will be added in 2017.

In addition to the above, another eight FTEs would be recommended to enable CEPOL to further increase the scale of its existing learning activities (e.g. online and residential courses, EPEP), to successfully implement flagship activities such as the new master's course and to further coordinate training activities and needs assessments at EU level.

The additional FTEs required are based on the 2012 Impact Assessment study which estimated that CEPOL, following the revision of its legal basis and to fully implement the

⁴⁵ For example, The Communication Unit in the Agency has a very limited capacity. It can only rely on two members of staff to run and/or support communication activities. The budget allocated to communication activities is also rather small with a lot to be done to restore the visibility of the Agency at EU level

LETS, would require a total of 13 additional FTEs. One FTE of this estimate can be removed given that CEPOL would no longer organise basic knowledge courses.

Are adequate resources allocated to the national CEPOL functions (in terms of number of staff dedicated to CEPOL)?

As CEPOL operates as a network of Member State police training institutes, with Member States directly involved in the delivery of its activities, the efficiency of CEPOL delivery also depends on the level of resources allocated by Member States to CEPOL activities.

In terms of financial resources, most of NCPs surveyed indicated that their national annual budget allocated to the tasks of NCP is below €50,000 (82% of respondents). Only 18% of NCPs indicated that the budget allocated was higher. Of those surveyed, 48% indicated that they do not have sufficient financial resources available to fulfil all tasks required. Therefore, not surprisingly, 61% of respondents indicated that to improve the effective implementation of CEPOL learning and training activities, additional resources at national level are needed. Moreover, 42% of respondents envisaged additional resources to ensure more effective implementation of the EPEP.

Concerning the adequacy of human resources allocated at national level, the 2012 study indicated that Member States perceived that, overall, adequate resources were allocated to these functions – even if some specific roles may be considered understaffed (e.g. NEC). According to 2015 ICF survey data, issues with regard to understaffing are still encountered at national level. This is, for example, illustrated by the fact that 21% of NCPs surveyed indicated that they still do not have even one FTE allocated to the implementation of CEPOL's activities.

Table 2.9 below shows that, on average, Member States allocated around three FTEs to CEPOL tasks. The table also shows that there are major variations in the number of FTEs allocated, ranging from six in Lithuania to 0.25 in Croatia.

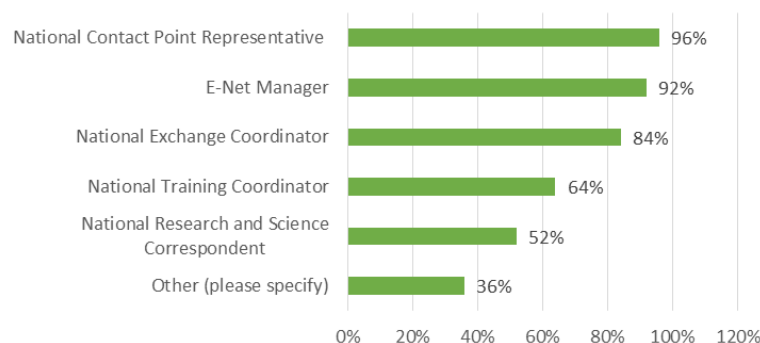
Table 2.9 FTEs allocated to CEPOL in the Member States

	No. of CEPOL roles	Total FTE	FTE per role
Lithuania	5	6	1.20
Finland	6	5	0.83
Greece	4	3	0.75
Poland	4	3	0.75
Slovakia	4	3	0.75
Austria	5	3	0.60
Hungary	5	3	0.60
Poland	5	3	0.60
Romania	5	3	0.60
The Netherlands	4	2	0.50
Slovenia	2	1	0.50
EU average	3.88	3.21	1.75
Malta	5	2	0.40
Spain	5	2	0.40
Cyprus	3	1	0.33
Denmark	5	1	0.20
The Czech Republic	6	1	0.17
Estonia	5	0.6	0.12
Luxembourg	3	0.25	0.08

	No. of CEPOL roles	Total FTE	FTE per role
Croatia	4	0.25	0.06

Some issues with understaffing in relation to specific roles were also identified. For example, while NCP representatives and E-Net managers are broadly represented in the Member States, some issues might be encountered in relation to the following roles: national exchange coordinator, training coordinator and research and science correspondent.

Figure 2.43 Which of the following CEPOL role(s) are represented in your NCP?



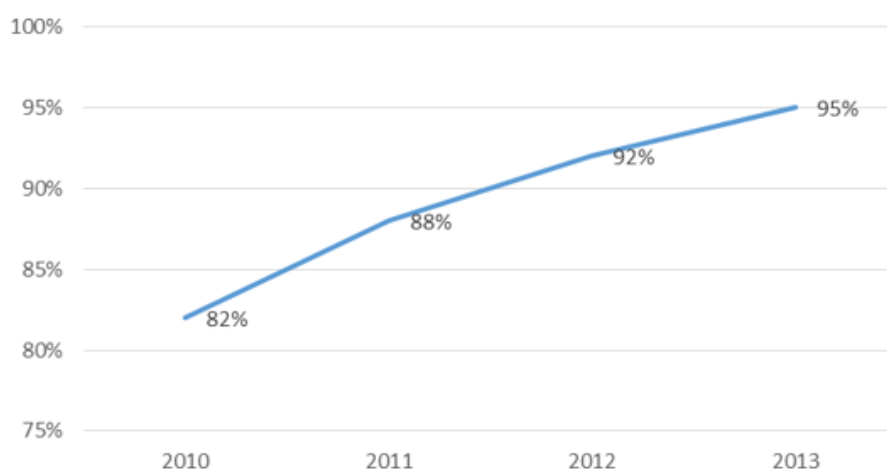
Source: NCPs survey 2015; N=25

With regard to the time allocated to the implementation of CEPOL activities, the 2012 NCP survey results indicated that more than one staff member out of four (29%) working on CEPOL networking roles did not have adequate time to undertake their activities. For this reason some actors called for stronger CEPOL units within Member States, and staff allocated full time to CEPOL-related activities. The 2015 ICF survey data shows that this recommendation was not addressed, as an even bigger share (36%) of NCPs surveyed indicated not having sufficient time to fulfil all tasks required.

To what extent has CEPOL been able to deliver its planned activities against the planned budget? Has the efficiency of CEPOL increased or decreased over the past few years?

Considering that the Agency has fully implemented its Annual Work Programmes over the evaluation period and that staffing levels have remained broadly the same, it is fair to argue that the efficiency of the Agency has probably increased over the years. This is especially true when considering the high staff turnover CEPOL has had to face following the relocation of the seat of the Agency to Budapest⁴⁶. The budget implementation has improved over the last few years. This was in large part due to the establishment of the Finance Unit in 2012. The budget monitoring also improved in the period under consideration, as budget monitoring took place on a weekly basis with dissemination to all units from 2012 onwards. Figure 2.44 shows the evolution of the execution of the CEPOL budget over the evaluation period.

⁴⁶ One stakeholder interviewed stated that “the calculations of the salaries linked to the relocation to Budapest have had a dramatic impact on staff remunerations (salary decreases of 50% were common). A significant portion of the staff decided not to relocate. It is questionable whether the recruitment of new staff is going to be like-for-like. The agency might find it difficult to attract talent from all Member States with an equal level of qualifications”

Figure 2.44 Execution of CEPOL's budget over the evaluation period

Source: CEPOL 2013 Annual Activity Report

A substantial part of the non-executed budget concerns operational funds, in particular grants to Member States implementing the courses⁴⁷. Throughout the evaluation period, CEPOL itself became more involved in the delivery of training, which also improved the efficiency in the execution of the budget. Currently, around 20% of all CEPOL activities are directly implemented by the Agency while, in the past, CEPOL was only a coordinating actor. However, the intention is not to further centralise the provision training in the future; as CEPOL's network partners will always have a key role, their commitment is crucial in achieving strategic goals.

Have the Agency's operations met the criteria of legality and regularity? Did the recent changes in the structure and governance of CEPOL help to ensure the sound financial management of the Agency? If yes, which changes particularly contributed to this?

Prior to the evaluation period, repeated audits had highlighted issues in the Agency's adherence to the Financial Regulations and Staff Regulations as well as failings in the management of the budget, human resources and procurement. In addition the audits have shown an inadequate response to issues highlighted in previous years of the evaluation period.

In 2010, the GB adopted the Multi-Annual Action Plan 2011–2014 with 12 objectives in the following areas:

- Programming and planning
- Financial and budgetary management
- Governance
- Human resource management
- Procurement.

Over the evaluation period a number of GB decisions have been adopted in order to respond to the Multi-Annual Action Plan. Examples of decisions taken included:

- Adopting the Staff Multi-Annual Policy Plan;
- Establishing a working group for planning, programming, training needs analysis and budgeting;
- Establishing an audit panel;

⁴⁷ The Corporate department evaluated that 20% of the grants remained unspent or were carried over in 2014 and, at the time of writing the report, 11% of the of the grants remained unspent or were carried over as of July 2015

- Adopting the European Police College's Internal Control Standards;
- Laying down administrative rules, commitments and guidelines for its courses and seminars;
- Rationalising CEPOL activities;
- Adopting the updated Multi-Annual Strategy Plan 2010–2014.

More information on the extent to which the implementation of the Multi-Annual Action Plan contributed to ensuring the sound financial management of the Agency will be gathered during the focus groups and workshops planned in the context of this assignment. However, at this stage, evidence gathered shows that, overall, the Agency has met the criteria of legality and regularity of the Agency's operations:

- The 2013 European Court of Auditor's report on the annual accounts of the European Police College for the financial year 2013 concluded that "the transactions underlying the annual accounts for the year ended 31 December 2013 are legal and regular in all material respects";
- The European Parliament decision of 29 April 2015 on the closure of the accounts of the European Police College for the financial year 2013, citing the Internal Audit Service (IAS) of the European Commission report noted the following improvements:
 - Budget monitoring and supervision efforts during the financial year 2013 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 94.89% and the payment appropriations execution rate was 92.46%; the European Parliament acknowledges the College's efforts to significantly increase the payment execution level ;
 - It acknowledged the decrease of committed appropriations carried over but notes they remain a concern;
 - It acknowledged that the IAS found the internal control system in place as providing reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of the business objectives for relevant human resources processes.
- CEPOL underwent three audits in 2014 (two audits by the Internal Audit Panel, one by the European Court of Auditors (ECA)). Audits confirmed that CEPOL's operations were fully legal and regular.

Both the 2013 European Court of Auditor's report and the cited European Parliament decision in 2015 called for an increased transparency of the recruitment procedure⁴⁸.

By end of 2013, CEPOL had implemented 83% of the IAS recommendation. The Activity Based Budget (ABB) system supposed to be in place by 2015 is likely to remedy the issues of carry-over commitments as well as the programming and planning of the activities – but only to some extent.

What are the areas for improvement?

A more strategic approach to the activities implemented could be regarded as a more efficient way of planning the Agency's operations. The ABB and ABM tools provide a good way forward towards more a strategic approach to planning and reporting on CEPOL's activities. A strategic approach to monitoring and evaluating CEPOL's activities in between the five-year external evaluations will contribute to the continuous improvement of the effectiveness and efficiency of CEPOL.

⁴⁸ As cited, "Notes with concern from the Court's report that the College's recruitment procedures are still not fully transparent as certain procedural elements are still incomplete, insufficiently clear or non-compliant; takes note of the College's actions towards revising the recruitment process by redesigning and improving the related work instructions, templates and checklists; calls on the College to inform the discharge authority about the impact the redesigned process has on the recruitments launched in 2014 and looks forward to the results of the Court's future audits regarding recruitment processes"

In the future, CEPOL should prioritise those learning and training activities which have demonstrated EU added value in the past, or those with innovative components over and above conventional training courses, and leave it to Member States to organise and/or migrate those to online platforms⁴⁹.

Stakeholders working with CEPOL called for improvements to be introduced in relation to streamlining and simplifying the administrative requirements linked to the system. However, the possibility of doing so is restricted by EU financial regulations (to which CEPOL has to comply).

As an alternative to grants, the Agency may consider organising more courses centrally (i.e. in Budapest). It is unclear, however, whether centrally-run courses would bring significant cost-savings as Budapest, besides being quite a central location, is expensive to get to by plane (as in most cases it requires at least one transfer).

Governing Board meetings should only be organised in Budapest, as opposed to having the members travelling to the Member State assuming the presidency of the European Union^{50,51}. For urgent meetings, use of video-conferencing facilities to organise GB meetings would appear to be more efficient. All meetings should be categorised, have clear terms of reference (e.g. format, agenda, etc.), and scheduled so that they can feed into one another. For instance, a range of solutions to training issues could be discussed with FPs ahead of the next GB meeting, to decide on which solution to select and implement.

It is suggested that the above opportunities for improvement are integrated as part of the Agency(ies) response to the Common Approach on EU decentralised agencies.

2.5.2 Cost-efficiency of CEPOL activities

Training and learning activities

The specific questions for training and learning activities are set out below:

What is the cost per participant? What is the average cost per training/conference/seminar? Are there major differences with regard to costs? If so, what are the main elements triggering those differences (for example, length, location of the courses, etc.)?

Do you consider that CEPOL delivers its training and other learning activities at a reasonable cost, when compared to costs for training at national level/by other EU agencies? Which activities are delivered very efficiently/encounter some efficiency issues? What are the success factors contributing to their efficient implementation and which factors contribute to inefficiencies? What are the areas for improvement?

What was the impact of the introduction of the grant agreement system? Are grant agreements an efficient tool? What are the areas for improvement?

What is the price per participant? What is the average cost per course/conference/seminar? Are there major differences with regard to costs? If so, what are the main elements triggering those differences (for example, length, location of the courses, etc.)?

Answering the questions above involves having access to a line-by-line activity budget with consistent information over the period. The figures reported below have been extracted from the Annual Reports and CEPOL's Final Accounts which have been reported following the

⁴⁹ The introduction of Activity Based Budgeting and Activity Based Management (ABB/ABM) in 2015 is supposed to review the programming and planning procedures. Prioritisation and monitoring processes should be addressed as part of the review

⁵⁰ The Agency would therefore not have to incur travel expenses for its own staff

⁵¹ This will improve in the future with the new regulation, which foresees that the chairmanship will be taken over by the three countries holding the Presidency

same definitions. Even though these numbers should be interpreted with care, they show a downward trend in the cost of training and learning activities and the cost per participant. The factors that impact on costs are clearly around the location of the courses and origin of the participants (affecting travel costs) and the length of the course (affecting hotel and subsistence costs, and the cost of the facilities and of the trainers).

Table 2.10 Average cost per event and per participant, euro⁵²

Year	Volume of learning & training activities	Number of participants in training & learning activities	Average cost per training & learning activity	Average cost per participant
2014	125	10,322	N/A	N/A
2013	111	8,251	26,261	353
2012	112	6,019	20,277	377
2011	106	4,206	20,611	519
2010	84	2,280	N/A	N/A

Source: CEPOL Annual Reports and CEPOL Final Accounts over the period

Do you consider that CEPOL delivers its training and other learning activities at a reasonable cost when compared to costs for training at national level/by other EU agencies? Which activities are delivered very efficiently/encounter some efficiency issues? What are the success factors contributing to their efficient implementation and which factors contribute to inefficiencies? What are the areas for improvement?

The NPCs/FPs surveyed considered that CEPOL delivers its training and other learning activities at a reasonable cost. They also considered that:

- The costs of CEPOL's seminars and courses are similar or less elevated to those of comparable activities organised outside the scope of CEPOL (75%); and
- CEPOL provides value for money to some (25%) or to a great extent (67%).

Stakeholders interviewed considered that webinars were a cost-efficient way to deliver training, whereas courses organised at central level were the most likely to encounter logistical issues (e.g. the air links to Budapest international airport are quite limited).

In order to further improve cost-efficiency of learning and training activities, the evaluator regards the selection of the training format (i.e. classroom training, webinar, seminar or e-module) as a key factor conducive to the efficient delivery of training and learning activities. Basic knowledge (e.g. describing EU institutions and programmes as well as their role in ensuring better cooperation in law enforcement) should be brought online as far as possible, and classroom training should be favoured for organising specialist courses and eventually with practical application (e.g. methods and practices to fight organised crime and related crime syndicates at EU level).

What was the impact of the introduction of the grant agreement system? Are grant agreements an efficient tool? What are the areas for improvement?

The introduction of the grant agreement system was considered as leading to greater efficiency by stakeholders interviewed. Some believed that the grant agreement system increased competition between training institutes thereby reducing the overall costs of the residential training. In addition, the transparency in the allocation of the activities has

⁵² The numbers differ slightly from those provided in Table 2.6 as different sources of information were used to calculate the average cost per training and learning activity, and the average cost per participant. Here the calculations are based on the information presented in the Annual Reports under the heading "Learning & Training Activities" as well as on the data included in the CEPOL Final Accounts (under the same heading). This ensured more consistency in the calculations

increased since the introduction of the system. Evidence showed that the criteria for awarding grants have been made clearer throughout the evaluation period; however, some national stakeholders might still be unaware of the improvements/activities undertaken by CEPOL in this area.

ICF survey data shows that almost half of those who had signed grant agreements (44%) agreed that the possibility to apply as a consortium of partners has helped pooling resources and contributed to efficiency gains. In relation to the application procedure, those who had signed grant agreements with CEPOL received good **support from the Agency** during the procedure. Most also agreed that the information included in the call was clear and easy to understand (89% of respondents). Furthermore, those who had signed a framework partnership with CEPOL agreed that they had received good support from CEPOL during the application procedure (89% of respondents). The information included in the call was found to be clear and easy to understand (89%).

Finally, the **procedure for submitting an application** was found to be straightforward overall (78% of those who had signed a framework partnership and 56% of those who had signed grant agreements agreed).

Some weaknesses and areas for improvement were also identified. Firstly, the amount of budget allocated through grants appeared to be structurally over budget for the period. The NPCs/FPs appeared to have a tendency to overestimate the cost of training which in turn led to underspending and carry-overs. Some stakeholders also argued that the decrease in costs took place at the expense of the quality of training and that the evaluation process of grant applications could still be made more transparent.

Moreover, the evaluation identified some room for streamlining and simplifying the administrative requirements linked to the grants. Respondents considered that reporting requirements could be simplified (22% of those who had signed grant agreements and one third of those who signed a framework partnership with CEPOL). The NPCs/FPs believed that an online tool should be set up for submitting applications (4 out of 9 respondents) to reduce the burden on the applicants.

In order to overcome these concerns and improve quality, discussions are currently underway concerning the possible introduction of multi-annual agreements. One of the options would be to offer multi-annual grant agreements to consortiums of CEPOL's FPs to implement training activities but also to update the content of training curricula and the respective e-modules. This is expected not only to improve coherence in the delivery of training but also to lead to greater efficiency. This issue requires consultations and in-depth discussions in the near future.

The EPEP

Was sufficient funding available for the EPEP actions to meet their objectives? Were the financial resources allocated sufficient to implement the planned EPEP-related activities and achieve the objectives of the programme?

To what extent has CEPOL been able to deliver its planned EPEP-related activities, against the planned budget?

What is the cost per participant?

Do you consider that CEPOL delivers the EPEP at a reasonable cost when compared to costs for similar activities at EU and national level? What are the success factors contributing to their efficient implementation of the EPEP and which factors contribute to inefficiencies? What are the areas for improvement?

Was sufficient funding available for the EPEP actions to meet their objectives? Were the financial resources allocated sufficient to implement the planned EPEP-related activities and achieve the objectives of the programme?

On the one hand, stakeholders surveyed (NCPs) considered that the EPEP was one of the most effective of CEPOL's activities. On the other hand, a minority of NCPs considered that (1) human resources and (2) financial resources at national level were insufficient to implement the EPEP; but (3) the number of police forces reached by the EPEP was sufficient (35%, 40% and 40% respectively).

In summary, although the financial resources allocated were sufficient to implement the planned EPEP-related activities, the budget set aside to organise the exchange programme did not allow for all interested police officers to take part.

To what extent has CEPOL been able to deliver its planned EPEP-related activities against the planned budget?

The table below reports the committed and budgeted amounts for the EPEP. At first sight, it looks like the Agency had difficulties budgeting the necessary amounts to run the EPEP. This might be due to the success of the programme over the evaluation period.

Table 2.11 Committed vs. budgeted amounts to the EPEP, euro

Year	Budgeted amount (€)	Committed amounts (€)	Variation (€)
2014	305,000	N/A	
2013	249,200	410,544	-161,344
2012	704,000	858,770	-154,770
2011	335,000	181,729	153,271

Sources: CEPOL Annual Budgets and CEPOL Annual Accounts

What is the cost per participant?

The cost per participant in the EPEP varied extremely over the period. The figures reported below should be interpreted with care and verified in view of the final report. They are based on committed amounts for the year and not paid amounts for the year. There may be a discrepancy between the year of the exchange and the year of the commitment and payments to support the exchange financially. The variance in the figures reported could also be explained by the length of the exchanges, the travel costs involved, etc.

Table 2.12 Average cost per event and per participant in the EPEP, euro

Year	Committed amounts (€)	Number of participants in the EPEP	Average cost per participants in the EPEP (€)
2014	N/A	312	N/A
2013	410,544	444	925
2012	858,770	293	2,931
2011	181,729	292	622

Sources: EPEP overview 2010–2014, CEPOL Annual Reports and CEPOL Annual Accounts

Do you consider that CEPOL delivers the EPEP at a reasonable cost when compared to costs for similar activities at EU and national level? What are the success factors contributing to their efficient implementation of the EPEP and which factors contribute to inefficiencies? What are the areas for improvement?

According to the feedback from stakeholders, the EPEP was one of the most effective activities of the Agency although resources could have been lacking at the time. Hence, from a stakeholders' perspective CEPOL delivered the EPEP at a reasonable cost for the EU's budget. The fact that Member States would have liked to organise more exchanges is also an indication of its value for money from a national stakeholder perspective. No evidence

was collected to report on factors hindering or increasing the efficiency of the Agency at the interim stage.

2.6 The EU added value of CEPOL

This section assesses the extent to which CEPOL's activities could not have taken place with Member States acting in isolation.

This section of the report will provide answers to the questions listed below.

Could similar changes have been achieved without EU action? What is the added value of CEPOL compared to existing national and EU forms of training and capacity building?

Was CEPOL the only way to create missing links and avoid fragmentation?

Was CEPOL better value for money compared to existing national and EU forms of training and capacity building (because resources or expertise could be pooled, actions better coordinated, etc.)?

Was CEPOL necessary to complement, stimulate, and leverage action to reduce disparities, raise standards and create synergies?

To what extent did CEPOL's activities meet needs that would have remained unaddressed in its absence?

What would be the most likely consequences of stopping or withdrawing CEPOL activities?

As shown in section 2.4.2 above, between 2011 and 2015, CEPOL's learning and training activities as well as the EPEP contributed to the successful development of networks of police forces and agencies, to strengthening the exchange of good practices and to creating a permanent platform for the regular sharing of modern EU law enforcement knowledge focused on practice. Furthermore, CEPOL's courses, e-learning and exchange activities contributed to the consolidation of knowledge about EU judicial instruments and tools, law enforcement techniques, and the cooperation and exchange of expertise between EU law enforcement agencies and officers.

Most of CEPOL's stakeholders consulted in the context of this evaluation considered the work of the Agency as key and, at the same time, believed that the high quality training support provided filled a gap in the training offer provided at national level by training institutes. While evidence shows that Member States are active in providing training to national law enforcement authorities, CEPOL played a unique role in overcoming the fragmentation brought by the differences in the national training offer, and contributed to the greater harmonisation of training offered for law enforcement authorities across the EU by:

- Assessing common training needs across the Member States;
- Covering common training needs with its training offer;
- Enhancing cooperation between national actors in the delivery of training;
- Introducing common standards in the delivery of training.

This is somewhat confirmed by the CEPOL 2013 mapping in relation to the LETS, which indicated that the majority of law enforcement agencies, in the Member States covered by the mapping, mentioned that an EU contribution for the development of training on European subjects is still essential at national level. CEPOL is in a unique position to fulfil this role.

In addition, in comparison to existing national and EU forms of training and capacity building, CEPOL was found to offer better value for money (because resources or expertise could be pooled, action better coordinated, etc.). CEPOL was also found to be necessary to complement, stimulate and leverage action to reduce disparities, raise standards, and create synergies (56% of stakeholders responding to the ICF survey strongly agreed with the statement and 44% agreed).

Finally, the majority of stakeholders interviewed reported that stopping or withdrawing CEPOL activities would deprive European police cooperation of its foundations, inevitably undermining the joint European police philosophy and culture, which starts from common education and learning standards against cross-border crime. Decentralising police training activities to Member States could create problems in terms of coordination and management and, more importantly, could significantly contribute to a decrease in the quality of training activities and learning outcomes. Discontinuing CEPOL activities would ultimately raise potential issues and create gaps in the fight against transnational crime.

2.7 Assessment of the structure and governance of CEPOL

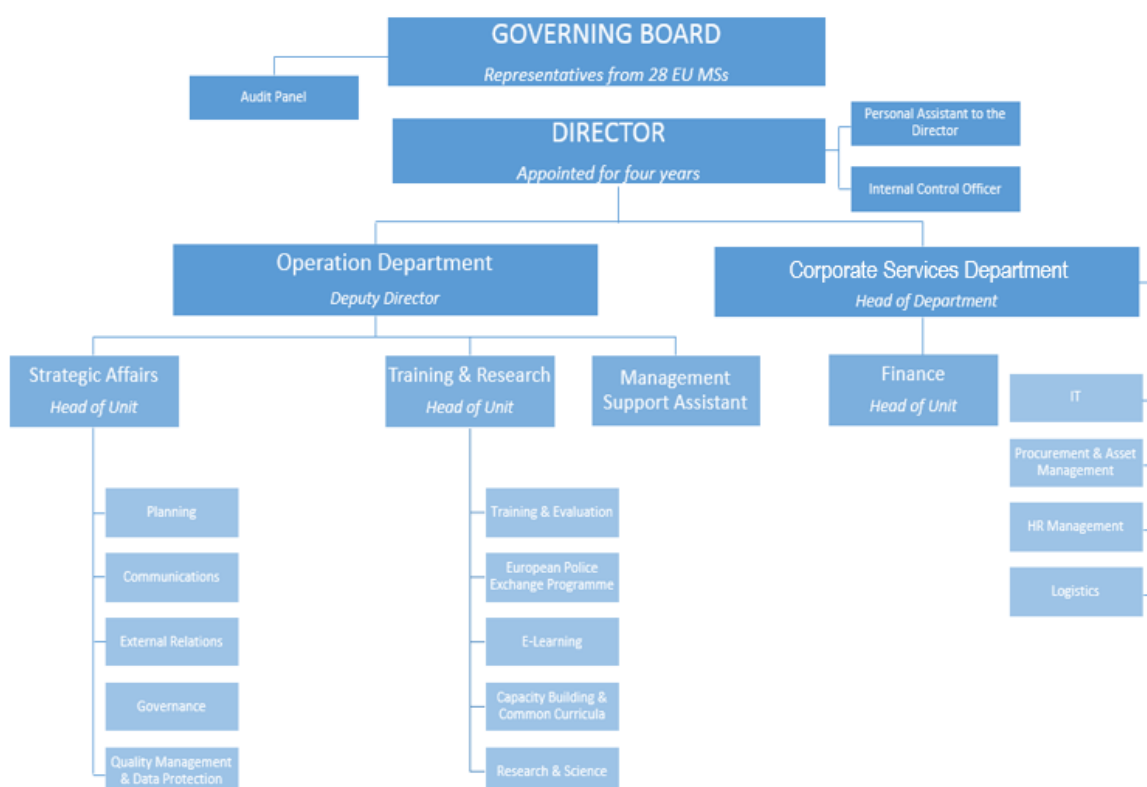
This section presents the recent changes in the structure and governance of CEPOL and assesses the extent to which they contributed to the effective delivery of activities and to improving the efficiency of the Agency

2.7.1 The structure and governance of CEPOL

Initially, CEPOL was set up as a network (before the 2005 Council Decision 2005/681/JHA) of national stakeholders, i.e. an intergovernmental body with Member States both funding the network and fully steering its activities. With the Council Decision, the network effectively became an Agency.

The governance and structure arrangements of CEPOL are currently established under Chapter III of the 2005 Council Decision, where the different structures, staff and contact points are outlined. The figure below presents the structure of CEPOL as from October 2014.

Figure 2.45 Current structure of CEPOL.



Source: CEPOL website

Governing Board

The GB is the main decision-making body within CEPOL. The aim of the GB is to focus on strategic and long-term policy and decision-making. It is composed of one representative/delegate of the national training institute of each EU Member State. Usually these are directors of the National Police Training Colleges. The GB is chaired by the Member State holding the presidency of the Council of the European Union. Within the GB, each Member State has one vote.

Since 2012, the GB has met only once every six months, to correspond with the change of the Member State holding the presidency⁵³. Currently, for the last six months of 2015, the GB is chaired by Luxembourg.

Director

The director, appointed by the GB for a four-year period, is responsible for the day-to-day work of the agency. The director is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Annual Work Programme and supports the work of the GB. The director does not have the right to vote in GB meetings.

Operation Department

The Operation department is responsible for two business units: Strategic Affairs and Training & Research. The department is tasked with the development and implementation of the content of CEPOL activities. More specifically, the department is tasked with:

- Liaising with experts and inquiries coming from the course organiser;
- Providing advice on scientific materials and expertise for all CEPOL activities that will be implemented by the agency;
- Mapping research results on police education and training in Europe;
- Maintaining contact with JHA and other agencies.

Corporate Services Department

The Corporate Services department is responsible for the Finance Unit and carries out the tasks of IT, procurement and asset management, HR and logistics, ensuring the efficient operation of the Agency and adherence to the relevant regulations.

National Actors

Each Member State appointed a CEPOL NCP who acts as the official link between the Member States and CEPOL. The NCPs are supported by other staff members as follows:

- National training coordinators
- National administrators
- Course managers
- National exchange coordinators
- National E-Net managers
- Research and science correspondents
- National common curricula coordinators.

2.7.2 The structure and governance of CEPOL according to the new legal basis

The structure and governance of CEPOL as described above will undergo major changes once the new legal basis enters into force.

⁵³ CEPOL (2012) Annual Report 2011, available at:
<https://www.cepola.europa.eu/sites/default/files/QRAB12001ENC.pdf>

Under the new legal basis, CEPOL will remain a network agency, bringing together the training institutes of the Member States and cooperating with the national units established in each Member State. However, CEPOL will have a structure composed of:

- A management board (MB) replacing the GB;
- An executive director; and
- Possibly, a Scientific Committee for Training (to be established at the discretion of the MB).

The possibility for the MB to create other advisory bodies is also anticipated under the new legal basis.

The proposal further aligns CEPOL with the principles laid down in the Common Approach on EU decentralised agencies, keeping in mind that CEPOL, as a centre of EU learning activities, should continue to rely on the network of the training institutes of the Member States and liaise with a single national unit in each Member State⁵⁴.

Moreover, the changes brought by the new regulation will also ensure a better balance between the representation of Member States and the Commission. Finally, the new proposal renders the executive director completely independent in the performance of his/her tasks and in ensuring that CEPOL carries out the tasks stipulated under the regulation.

The box below summarises the main articles of the new regulation related to the governance and management of the Agency.

Box 2.2 Main changes introduced by the new regulation

Management Board (Articles 8–9)

The MB will be the main decision-making body of the Agency. It will be composed of representatives from each Member State and two representatives from the Commission with voting rights (Article 8). Each board member will have a (renewable) mandate of four years, and the possibility to appoint a substitute in his/her absence. The board will meet twice a year and decisions will be made according to a two thirds majority, including about CEPOL's annual budget (which was previously decided unanimously).

The MB will have a chairperson and a deputy chairperson chosen from the members with voting rights.

Executive Director (Article 14)

The executive director will manage and be the legal representative of CEPOL. He/she will report to the European Parliament on the performance of the duties, under invitation. The Council may invite the executive director to report on the performance of his/her duties. The executive director of CEPOL will take part in the deliberations, but will not have the right to vote (Article 12). In addition, the MB, under exceptional circumstances, can also temporarily suspend the powers delegated to the executive director.

Scientific Committee for Training (Article 15)

The Scientific Committee for Training might be set up, at the discretion of the MB, as an independent advisory body. Its main aim is to guarantee and guide the scientific quality of CEPOL's training activities. It will be composed of 11 persons of the highest academic and/or professional background chosen through a transparent call for applications and a selection procedure to be published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU). The mandate of the Scientific Committee's members will be five years, non-renewable.

⁵⁴ COM (2014) 465 final/2, Subject: Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing a European Union agency for law enforcement training (CEPOL), repealing and replacing Council Decision 2005/681/JHA

If established, the Scientific Committee will elect its chairperson and deputy chairperson for a mandate of five years. It will meet four times a year and will adopt positions by simple majority. It will be assisted by a secretary designated by the Committee and appointed by the executive director.

2.7.3 Extent to which the structure and governance of CEPOL contributed to the effective delivery of activities

How has CEPOL's structure (including its bodies and advisory groups) helped to achieve the Agency's mission and implement its strategy? Is the allocation of responsibilities to different CEPOL actors and organisational units clear? Are clear procedures and rules for different components in place (for example, linked to the role of NCPs, etc.)?

Does CEPOL's current institutional set-up contribute to the successful implementation of the Agency's mandate? Does the decentralised nature of CEPOL contribute to the effective implementation of activities? Do, on the other hand, differences in approaches at national level (related, for example, to the set-up and role of NCPs, etc.) lead to different results/quality of outputs/outcomes?

Did the recent changes in the structure and governance of CEPOL help to increase the agency's effectiveness with regard to the implementation of its overall strategy and specific activities? If yes, which changes particularly contributed to improving effectiveness?

What are the main critical successful factors, which contributed to the effective implementation of CEPOL's strategy/activities (for example, good management practices, good decision-making practices, etc.)? What are the areas for improvement?

The 2012 study showed that the NCPs and other CEPOL national actors undertook a very wide range of activities but that the NCP mandate and role were not well defined. The legal basis of CEPOL did not make reference to the role and responsibilities of the NCPs or how the points should be structured at national level. Moreover, the study indicated that no formal documents existed (for example, GB Decisions or formal guidance) outlining a list of tasks and responsibilities for NCPs. In practice, more than half the NCPs and networks actors felt that the role of the NCP was not clearly defined. As a result, Member States implemented different approaches at national level to taking up the NCP role and other network roles at national level. This led to very different set-ups as well as to difficulties in cooperation and communication, not only between the centralised and decentralised levels, but also between NCPs in different Member States.

Evidence gathered in the context of this evaluation shows that the issues concerning the lack of clarity in the role and responsibilities of NCPs were overcome to some extent. The NCP survey showed that, overall, NCPs are satisfied with the available guidance describing their role, tasks and overall responsibilities. In fact, more than half the NCPs surveyed confirmed that they have guidance/a handbook available that sets out common procedures, tasks, roles and responsibilities of CEPOL national actors. This guidance, developed both at central and national level, was, in most cases, considered to be very clear (80% of respondents to the NCP survey). The 40% indicating that they did not have any guidance or handbook of common standards in place, considered that, in most cases, it was generally clear how to fulfil their role, tasks and responsibilities. In certain cases, however, the lack of guidance had led to confusion over the division of roles and responsibilities between the different CEPOL national actors and coordinators (3 out of 9 respondents) and to some difficulties in internal (2/10) and external (3/10) communication.

While NCPs are more positive (compared to previous reports) about the clarity of guidance available on their role and responsibilities, evidence shows that, similar to what was indicated in the 2012 report, there is still no uniformity in the CEPOL organisational set-up at national level (confirmed by 67% of NCPs). Some GB members also added that, "at national level, there are many differences amongst Member States in how they set up the NCPs and the resources allocated to the latter." These differences have resulted (according to 67% of

NCPs surveyed) in significant variations in the quality of outputs/outcomes (in relation to learning and training activities organised and in the implementation of the EPEP).

It is anticipated that the introduction of the new legal basis of CEPOL will impact positively on at least some of the issues identified above. In fact, Chapter II of the draft proposal (on cooperation between Member States and CEPOL) and, more precisely, Article 6, details the role and tasks of the CEPOL National Units. However, the new regulation also mentions that each Member State will structure the organisation and the staff of the national unit according to its national legislation. This therefore still leaves room for disparities in the set-up of such units in the future.

With regard to the **decentralised nature of CEPOL**, different views were identified in the 2012 study. Some Member State representatives very much viewed CEPOL as an intergovernmental body made up of individual national representatives who together, as part of the GB (already set up as part of Council Decision 2000/820/JHA establishing CEPOL), were entirely responsible for developing CEPOL's strategic direction, work programmes and ensuring their delivery. The Agency was perceived to have a supporting or administrative role. On the other hand, other Member State representatives (and the Commission) considered CEPOL to be an Agency working through a network structure. The study reported that the above differences in perceptions led to some "tension", especially when discussing the future of CEPOL.

Evidence gathered in the context of this evaluation indicates that this apparent tension seems to have dissolved. Throughout the evaluation period, GB members became more familiar with the idea of CEPOL as an Agency. They now appreciate the support provided by CEPOL at central level while considering the national approach as a key element for the development of activities, which are highly relevant to national law enforcement authorities' needs. According to a great majority of interviewees, the peculiar structure of CEPOL also supported and facilitated the effective implementation of the activities. As one GB member put it, "the national perspective helps a lot in the effective delivery of activities. The Member States bring the knowledge of training needs and share them with others. The network structure enhances communication and sharing of perspectives. Another GB member stated that it would be hard to imagine CEPOL not in a network structure. The latter provides added value as national authorities have the knowledge of national procedures and needs. The coordination at central level is also essential to the effective delivery of activities. Another interviewee indicated that the decentralisation of CEPOL and the involvement of many Framework Partners is one of the key elements leading to the success of the Agency."

Finally some interviewees also indicated that creation of the Operations Unit within the Agency, although supported by a limited number of permanent staff, contributed to the effective implementation of CEPOL training activities.

Communication within CEPOL and cooperation amongst its different components was also judged as effective overall by the GB members interviewed. As a result of the ease of communication and cooperation, "the Agency can implement successfully its mandate and effectively deliver its overall strategy and specific activities." Survey results confirm that, overall, cooperation and internal communication in the delivery of training and learning activities works effectively (75% of respondents to the NPC/FP survey; around 50% of the NCPs strongly agreed with the statement). The main success factors highlighted by stakeholders consulted related to effective cooperation, cooperation with central CEPOL; peer-to-peer cooperation; and its flat organisational hierarchy.

The main methods of internal communication are writing (100% of NCPs surveyed were these methods), phone (72%) and face-to-face communication (60%). All NCPs surveyed agreed that the internal communication methods and tools used were appropriate.

It was suggested that cooperation and communication could be improved by having more ad hoc face-to-face meetings (online or physical), and that NCPs should be more involved in decision-making processes – currently only undertake by GB members with voting rights.

Desk research showed that communication and cooperation arrangements within CEPOL are constantly developing and improving. For example, a new participant management application helping in the organisation of courses, meetings and the EPEP will be deployed in 2015, as explained in section 2.4.2 above.

With regard to the **adequateness of CEPOL support in the delivery of activities**, the majority of NPCs and FPs surveyed were satisfied with the extent and quality of support received, although 25% of NPCs/FPs and NCPs surveyed indicated that, in order to improve effective implementation of CEPOL's learning and training activities, additional support from CEPOL at central level was needed. The interviews undertaken, however, showed that, in some instances, national authorities would need further support in dealing with administrative requirements (such as reporting and monitoring), "Currently, there is a lot of bureaucracy for NCPs and the reporting requirements are burdensome. Some streamlining would be required as well as more use of e-reporting arrangements".

With regard to the EPEP, the CEPOL 2014 NEC survey demonstrated that NECs were highly satisfied with the administrative support provided by the central EPEP team. In fact 66% strongly agreed and 31% agreed with the statement, "The administrative support provided by the EPEP team was useful and sufficient".

2.7.4 Organisational efficiency

This section of the report will provide answers to the questions listed below.

What are the costs associated with the management and administration of CEPOL, by its different components?

How efficient has the implementation of the strategic decision-making process been? How long does it take, on average, for the GB to make a decision? What is the average time taken from the proposal stage to the implementation stage? How has this evolved over the past five years? Are delays in decision-making still encountered? What kinds of decisions are taken by the GB – strategic or also micro/administrative (estimate the share)? What is the size of the GB? How often does the GB meet?

How efficient has the relocation of CEPOL been (timeliness, cost-effectiveness, impact on business continuity)? How long did it take to relocate the Agency? What were the costs associated? Did the relocation help to increase the Agency's efficiency?

What are the costs associated with the management and administration of CEPOL, by its different components?

As already reported in the efficiency section, the budget spent by CEPOL over the evaluation period has been broadly stable i.e. around €3 million for Agency staff (including interim staff) and around €300,000 for administrative expenditure.

Table 2.13 CEPOL financial resources over the evaluation period, euro

Budget Title	Payments 2010	Payments 2011	Payments 2012	Payments 2013
T1: Agency Staff Expenditure	2,659,968	3,059,005	3,422,741	3,886,713
T2: Administrative Expenditure	263,618	379,441	384,203	331,921

Source: Interpreted from CEPOL Annual Accounts and Annual Activity Reports

How efficient has the implementation of the strategic decision-making process been? How long does it take, on average, for the GB to make a decision? What is the average time taken from the proposal stage to the implementation stage? How has this evolved over the past five years? Are delays in decision-making still encountered? What kinds of decisions are taken by the GB – strategic or also micro/administrative (estimate the share)? What is the size of the GB? How often does the GB meet?

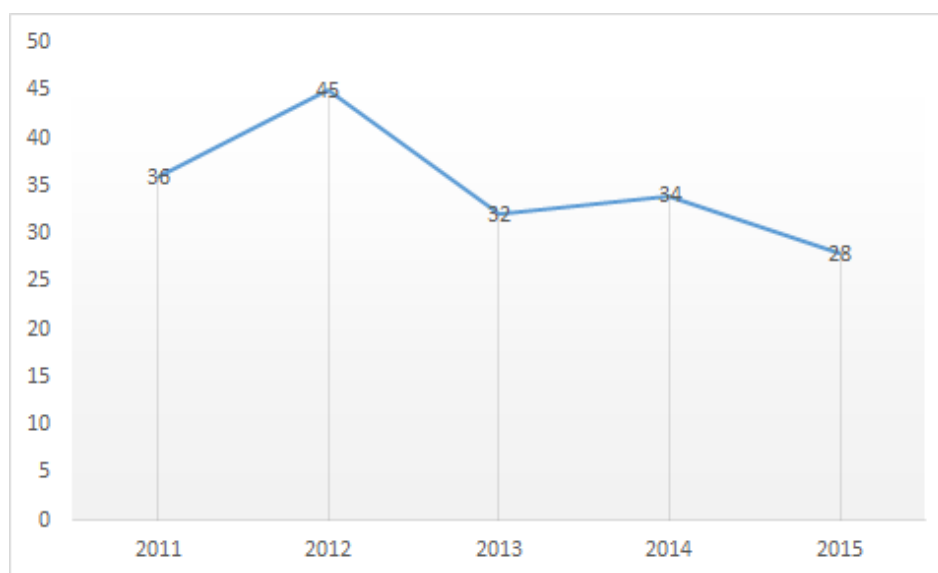
In relation to governance, the decision-making process through the GB has improved throughout the evaluation period. The GB is meeting less regularly and a written procedure is used to make decisions on urgent matters that occur between two GB meetings.

Some stakeholders still reported some (minor) issues, questioning the decision-making process, such as decisions taken not being implemented in a timely manner⁵⁵, the nature of the decisions being rather administrative as opposed to strategic, and/or the volume⁵⁶ and quality of the decisions made when using the written procedure.

A further analysis of the decisions taken by GB members shows that:

- The number of decisions remained overall stable during the period under observation, as shown by Figure 2.46 below;
- The type of decisions (administrative vs. strategic) also remained quite stable with a greater share (65%) of administrative-related decisions taken in 2014 (as shown in Figure 2.47);
- Most GB decisions taken related to the content of CEPOL activities (32 over the evaluation period), the budget (29) and administrative rules (27), as shown by Figure 2.48;
- All the decisions taken by the GB were in line with the mandate provided by Article 10 of the 2005 CEPOL Council Decision.

Figure 2.46 Number of GB decisions (2011–2015⁵⁷)



⁵⁵ Internal factors but also external factors, such as clearance from the EC on budgetary matters, explain the delays in implementation of Governing Board members' decisions

⁵⁶ One stakeholder interviewed noted that the written procedure is not limited to urgent matters, as it was initially intended. This in turn impacts the quality of the decisions taken

⁵⁷ For 2015: 28 decisions as of October 2015

Figure 2.47 Type of GB decisions (2011–2015)

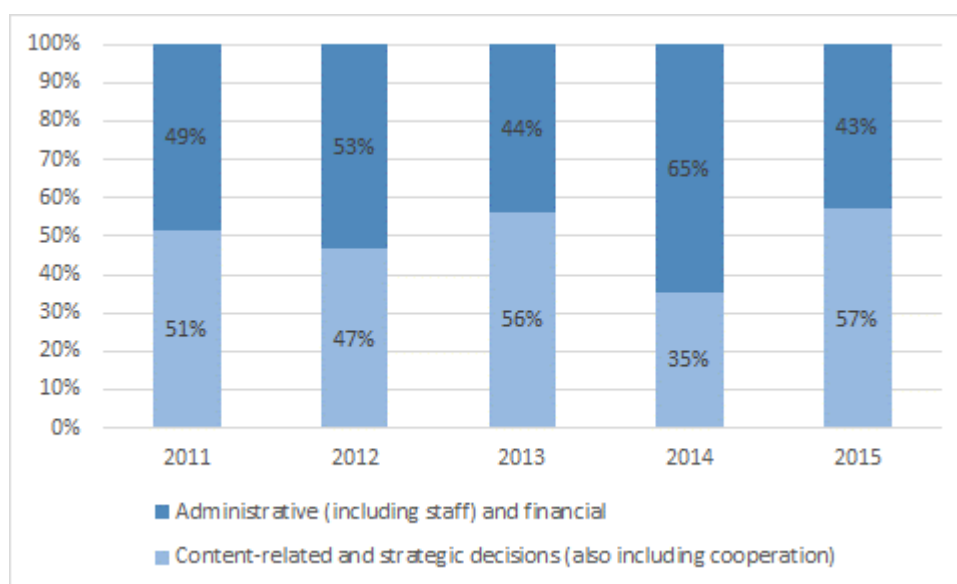
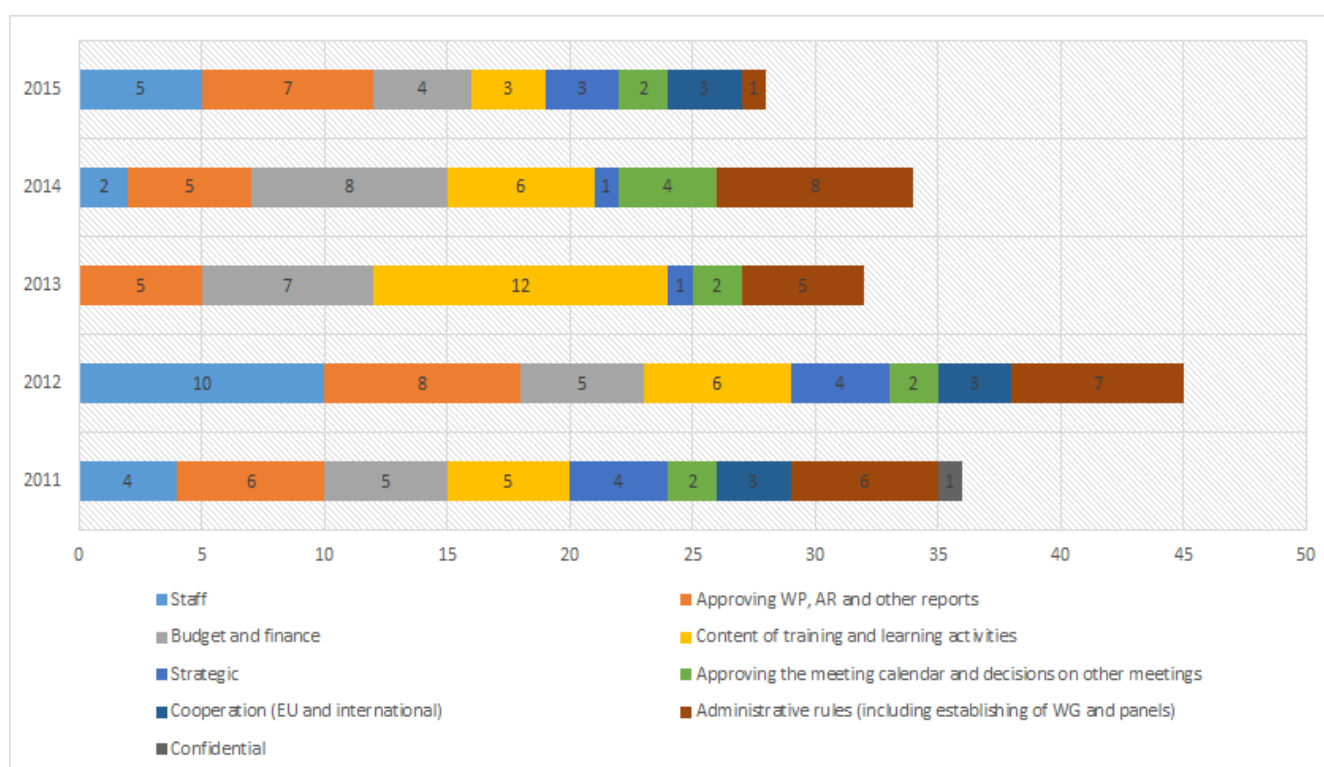


Figure 2.48 Type of GB decisions (2011–2015)



Note: working programme (WP), annual report (AR) and working group (WG)

Moreover, there is evidence that the level of implementation of the decisions was satisfactory over the period with around 90% of the draft GB decisions being adopted over the period⁵⁸. In addition, the level of implementation of audit recommendations tended to decrease over the period from 100% in 2012, to 83% in 2013, to 64% in 2014 (compared to a target of 100%). The level of implementation of plans (i.e. procurement, evaluation

⁵⁸ CEPOL Balanced Scorecard 2014 report, and previous Annual Activity Reports

recommendation, strategic action plans, etc.) has been satisfactory nearing or exceeding the 90% target over the evaluation period.

With regard to administrative decisions, in 2014, the director took 33 administrative decisions to improve the Agency's efficiency⁵⁹. These included decisions on grant procedures, on working groups, on the meeting calendar, on budget implementation, on planning of internal procedures and on the revision of the Agency's organisational structure. Regular management, financial and general coordination meetings were chaired by the deputy director throughout 2014 to ensure efficient management and coordination.

How efficient has the relocation of CEPOL been (timeliness, cost-effectiveness, impact on business continuity)? How long did it take to relocate the Agency? What were the associated costs? Did the relocation help to increase the Agency's efficiency?

As demonstrated in section 2.5, the relocation has been effected in a timely manner. Hungary was chosen as the new host country for CEPOL in May 2014, and the Agency moved to its new headquarters in Budapest on 1 October 2014. CEPOL and its host country managed the whole project in less than four months. Evidence gathered shows that the relocation had little to no impact on business continuity⁶⁰, despite the fact that a number of staff chose not to relocate to the new seat of the Agency.

The 2013 IAS report estimates that the relocation has reduced the administrative costs by €200,000 a year, due to the agreement with the Hungarian administration. Indeed, the use of the offices in CEPOL's new headquarters is free of charge and the infrastructure will be provided for at least ten years.

2.8 Assessment of communication activities

This section assesses the extent to which CEPOL's communication activities were relevant to the target audience, were effectively and efficiently implemented and managed to increase the visibility of the Agency.

Are the communication methods used by CEPOL (both internal and external) relevant for the target audience? How does CEPOL communicate internally and externally? Are the methods/tools used appropriate for reaching the intended target audience? What are the main areas for improvement?

To what extent were CEPOL's communication activities with regard to learning and training activities and the EPEP effective? Did communication activities reach and attract the right target audience? Who is involved in such communication activities (CEPOL at central and national level)?

What is the role of the national CEPOL components in implementing communication activities? What are their views on the effectiveness of such activities?

What has been the impact of CEPOL communication activities? To what extent is CEPOL known and visible to the relevant audiences?

Are the communication methods used by CEPOL (both internal and external) relevant for the target audience? How does CEPOL communicate internally and externally? Are the methods/tools used appropriate for reaching the intended target audience? What are the main areas for improvement?

CEPOL's first Communications Strategy was adopted by the GB in November 2012⁶¹. The strategy highlighted two communication priorities for the Agency:

⁵⁹ Annual Programme, 2014

⁶⁰ For instance, the Agency managed to deliver against its plans for the year 2014

⁶¹ Decision 43/2012/GB https://www.cepola.europa.eu/sites/default/files/43-2012-GB_Communications_Strategy.pdf

- To raise awareness of CEPOL and explain the rationale for its existence; and
- To enhance its reputation as a provider of superior learning services for law enforcement officers.

The communication strategy identified the main messages to convey to the public as well as providing an action plan for 2013, in which the priority actions related to (i) raising the overall image of CEPOL and (ii) marketing CEPOL's products.

The strategy also identified the main target groups and relevant actions to be carried out to reach them (i.e. different messages and different channels were developed for different audiences). Evidence therefore shows that the Agency invested efforts in developing communication tools which were tailor-made for the target audiences. While there was no information on the communication needs of the target audiences, it is reasonable to assume that CEPOL, when tailoring its communication strategy, identified the most relevant communication tools for each specific target group. This is confirmed by ICF survey data. As shown in Figure 2.50, all respondents to the NCPs' survey agreed that the external communication methods/tools used were appropriate to reach the intended target audiences.

The table below presents the main target audiences of CEPOL (at agency level) as well as the planned communication actions (as presented in the 2012 Communications Strategy). The audiences highlighted in grey were marked as being high priority.

Table 2.14 Main target audiences and planned communication actions

Main target audiences	Intended outcomes	Planned communication actions and channels used
Influencers (senior decision-makers)	This audience should think of CEPOL as a top-ranking EU agency that delivers value, and actively support investment in CEPOL	CEPOL reports (Annual Report; ETS/Training Needs Analysis report) Personal contact/messaging from director (and senior management)
National contact points	NCPs should be aware of CEPOL's learning options and offering, and actively recommend CEPOL courses to as wide an audience as possible/actively seek out participants for CEPOL courses	Marketing materials, CEPOL reports, CEPOL factsheets (for users), website, E-Net, emails
Communicators at police training institutes	Communicators at national police training institutes proactively communicate about CEPOL	Missing in the strategy
Users: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Senior police officers ■ JHA agency officers ■ All police officers (in particular for e-learning products) 	Communications should lead this audience (i) to view participation in CEPOL courses as a means of career progression, (ii) to apply to participate in courses, (iii) to actively recommend CEPOL courses to colleagues	Course-specific marketing materials, website, E-Net, publications
Staff	Communications should provide staff with the tools to speak positively and consistently about CEPOL. An effective internal communications strategy will ensure that CEPOL staff is engaged with the organisation's goals and their role in achieving those goals	Style guide (including visual identity), face-to-face, email
Science and research community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ European police science practitioners ■ European police 	Communications should encourage this audience to participate in CEPOL activities and make them aware of CEPOL's expertise in this field	Bulletin, annual conference, face-to-face, e-communications, conferences

Main target audiences	Intended outcomes	Planned communication actions and channels used
science researchers		
Media/communicators	CEPOL's established media partners will view the information that CEPOL provides as credible and potentially newsworthy	News releases, media kits, email, web
Academics	Communications should raise this audience's awareness of and interest in CEPOL	Reports, presence at events, publications, web
General public	After exposure to CEPOL communications, the general public should have an understanding of what CEPOL does, and think that CEPOL plays a valuable role in safeguarding the security of European citizens	Web content, annual reports, information stands, face-to-face, publications, web

Source: 2012 Communications Strategy

With regard to the main channels, tools and products, the Communications Strategy identified a number of them. It also provided some information on their intended use in the future. The table below provides a comparison between what was outlined in the strategy and development throughout the evaluation period.

Table 2.15 Communication channels, tools and products

Channels, tools and products	Intended use	Development during the evaluation period
Web	<p>The strategy identified some weaknesses as follows:</p> <p>The information appears un-targeted and the channel is used more as a means of documenting what has been done, rather than as a communications tool</p> <p>For the future, the strategy mentioned the following:</p> <p>CEPOL's website will continue to be a primary channel for CEPOL. It will be important to identify the users (and their needs) of the website versus the users (and their needs) of E-Net. It will also be important to ensure that the website has a clear identity, will be continuously updated and easy to navigate. Ideally, the website will become a more interactive site utilising additional multimedia techniques to improve the impact of CEPOL's communications.</p>	<p>CEPOL's website appears to be relatively easy to navigate and provides information on the different learning tools provided by the Agency. Multimedia techniques (mainly videos) are used to disseminate the information related to CEPOL's themes and activities</p> <p>There is currently no clear distinction between the information for users and the E-Net users</p> <p>Just a limited part of the website (general information) and only a few publications are available in the national languages</p>
News releases	<p>For the future, the strategy mentioned the following:</p> <p>CEPOL will identify genuine news items and develop a targeted media list to ensure distribution to interested parties</p>	<p>CEPOL published a high volume of news releases, generally following its events</p> <p>However, news releases remain un-targeted for specific audiences and are not regularly updated. Moreover, there are no search criteria for news items and no news is available for 2014–2015</p>

Channels, tools and products	Intended use	Development during the evaluation period
Publications	<p>For the future, the strategy recommended the following:</p> <p>CEPOL must continue to produce publications and should develop some annual publications for delivery each year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Annual Course Catalogue (starting 2013) ■ Annual Report (starting 2012) ■ Exchange Programme Year Book <p>CEPOL should also diversify into shorter leaflets on specific course content, e.g. webinars, e-learning</p> <p>It will also be worthwhile investigating how to issue some publications as e-books</p>	<p>CEPOL issues a range of publications annually (available on the website) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Editorial and production management ■ Annual reports ■ Activity reports ■ Work Programmes ■ Training catalogues ■ European Police Science and Research Bulletins ■ Exchange Programme Year Book ■ Strategic documents ■ General information <p>These publications are available on the website and distributed to members of the network (GB, NCPs and secretariat staff) via mail, events and courses</p> <p>A webpage was made available in 2012, collecting scientific police publications related to the European Union</p> <p>In addition, an e-library is available to E-Net users. According to the Annual Report 2013, there were 1,553 publications in the e-library</p>
Newsletter	<p>For the future, the strategy recommended the following:</p> <p>Create a structured newsletter that is produced six times a year, create an editorial calendar around specific themes for each issue, expand readership and contributors to the wider (EU) JHA community</p>	<p>CEPOL publishes a monthly newsletter, disseminated to Agency staff and NCPs. The newsletter is published on E-Net and follows CEPOL's events. They are divided into the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Education and Training ■ The Exchange Programme ■ General News ■ The Governing Board ■ The Presidency ■ Science and Research
Conferences and events	<p>The strategy identified some weaknesses, as follows:</p> <p>CEPOL has had a mixed experience of conferences and events. In some cases, activities have been labelled conferences when there were only a small number of participants</p> <p>For the future, the strategy recommended the following:</p> <p>Identify one signature CEPOL conference per year and develop communication plans to support and promote this. In addition, invest in marketing materials, e.g. display stands to ensure that the conference is fully branded</p>	<p>No examples of editorial calendars were found.</p> <p>According to grant agreement information, CEPOL organised a total of eight conferences in the period 2011–2014, reaching 326 participants. However, the visibility of such events on the CEPOL website seems quite limited. It is indeed possible to find information on such events only by searching through a long list of activities. Within the search function, only information for 2015 and 2014 is provided (however the “date search” function does not enable users to search by year, only by date)</p> <p>Research and science conferences appear to have better visibility on the CEPOL website (brochures and presentations are also publicly available). However, there is no information for 2014</p>
Roadshows	The strategy identified some weaknesses as	Scarce information was found on the roadshows

Channels, tools and products	Intended use	Development during the evaluation period
<p>Gifts and giveaways</p>	<p>follows:</p> <p>In 2010–2011, CEPOL participated jointly with Europol in a number of roadshows in the Member States. CEPOL's participation was not especially visible during the roadshows</p> <p>For the future, the strategy recommended the following:</p> <p>Additional branded materials could increase CEPOL's visibility at roadshows. Further, it is important to ensure that there is adequate staff available to participate in roadshows</p> <p>For the future, the strategy recommended the following:</p> <p>CEPOL will continue to use gifts and giveaways as promotional items. However, the communications team will create some guidelines to ensure their most effective use</p>	<p>organised during the evaluation period. Three references could be found in documents developed by CEPOL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Europol/CEPOL, Common Activity for European Decision-Makers, in the JHA area in Bulgaria (88 participants), December 2010. Source: Annual Report 2010 ■ Europol/CEPOL Roadshow in Warsaw, Poland, 2011. Source: Visions to Vision ■ CEPOL/Europol Roadshow in Rome, March 2012. Source: CEPOL website <p>However, the visibility of such events is very low. More information on the roadshows was found in national newspapers (e.g. roadshow held in April 2011, <i>Greece And Europol For a Safer Europe-Europol & CEPOL Roadshow</i>⁶²) or sometimes on the Europol website</p> <p>No information was available on the extent to which this took place</p>
<p>Multimedia</p>	<p>The strategy identified some weaknesses, as follows:</p> <p>CEPOL does not tend to use multimedia tools in its communications</p> <p>For the future, the strategy recommended the following:</p> <p>Use of multimedia will ensure that CEPOL's communications become more engaging. It is important to identify which audiences will best benefit from which tools</p>	<p>Since 2011, CEPOL has used multimedia for online learning modules. Some of these modules are publicly available on CEPOL's YouTube account, whilst the rest are available on CEPOL's secure e-learning platform (for registered users only)</p> <p>In April 2015, CEPOL also launched <i>CEPOL Corporate Film 2014</i> on its YouTube (530 views) and Vimeo accounts. In comparison to recorded webinars available on YouTube (e.g. the webinar on EASO had 1,098 views), this film has had a rather low number of views. Since 2011 there has been a significant improvement in presentation of its Annual Reports. These documents contain more infographics and are easier to read than before</p>
<p>Media relations</p>	<p>The strategy identified some weaknesses as follows:</p> <p>CEPOL has no proactive media relations strategy in place</p> <p>For the future, the strategy recommended the following:</p> <p>It is important for CEPOL to develop a media network and use it to increase awareness of CEPOL and its activities. As a first step, CEPOL</p>	<p>No information was available on the extent to which this took place</p>

⁶² <http://www.newsbomb.gr/ellada/news/story/43670/ekpaideytiko-dihmero-europol-elas>

Channels, tools and products	Intended use	Development during the evaluation period
Social media	<p>should identify which media do our most important target audiences pay most attention to and which media organisations(s) will consider our messages newsworthy. Using this information, CEPOL can build a contact database</p> <p>The strategy identified some weaknesses as follows:</p> <p>CEPOL has little experience in using social media. Social media will form a part of CEPOL's communication strategy. During 2012, CEPOL can increase its use of Twitter, and can also increase its use of other social media tools to complement more traditional forms of communication. The first steps will be to activate CEPOL's presence on Facebook. Coupled with this, the communications team should publish a social media communications policy for CEPOL</p>	<p>In 2011, CEPOL established a Twitter account which currently, in November 2015, has 430 followers and 128 tweets (in comparison, the CEPOL Belgium account was established in April 2012 and has 330 followers and almost 500 tweets)</p> <p>With regard to Facebook, CEPOL created an account called <i>Elearning CEPOL</i>. Since January 2015 it has clocked up 1,623 "likes". It has quite regular updates on the upcoming webinars, which are usually uploaded one month in advance. However, there is very little or no activity from those who like the account, therefore the actual reach through this social media tool could be less significant than initially suggested</p> <p>CEPOL also uses its YouTube account that was established in January 2012, and since then has reached 102 subscribers and amassed 13,212 views in total. As part of this account there is also a playlist called <i>CEPOL e-Learning</i> dedicated to recorded public webinars</p> <p>In addition to its YouTube account, CEPOL also has a Vimeo account. The latter is used for research and science information and has no information on webinars and courses. No information concerning whether CEPOL has developed specific social media communications policies could be found</p>

Sources: 2012 Communications Strategy and research

In 2015, CEPOL is planning to launch its new corporate and visual identity, in line with its new legal mandate, with the aim of rebranding itself. An image analysis has been completed under an externally contracted study. Following these results, the decision was taken by management to undergo a total rebranding. The new graphic line and logo have been developed and three options were presented to the GB in November 2015. In the near future, CEPOL will also try to engage with the media to ensure the appropriate dissemination of its activities' results and reach a wider audience⁶³. No additional information about the progress in implementing this plan was available.

The evaluation findings show that while the 2012 Communications Strategy is coherent and comprehensive (it includes clear objectives and messages, a good description of the target audiences as well as of the planned actions tailored to different target groups) there seems to be room for improving the transparency in communicating how the was developed in practice. This information is not currently publicly available. A review of the strategy was initiated in October 2015.

⁶³ CEPOL Work Programme 2015, p. 19

***Who is involved in the communication activities (CEPOL at central and national level)?
What is the role of the national CEPOL components in implementing communication activities?***

In addition to the Communication Unit (created within the Strategic Affairs Unit of CEPOL), NCPs are the main actors involved in the implementation of communication activities. The 2012 Communications Strategy states that “NCPs have a role and an interest in ensuring that CEPOL is well-known and well-regarded within their own organisations”. Hence, the strategy foresaw the production of marketing materials for use by NCPs. The main communication tasks of national actors were, however, not detailed by the strategy. In fact, the strategy indicated that the extent to which NCPs have the resources to proactively promote CEPOL differs from Member State to Member State, “As part of its communications strategy, therefore, the Agency cannot expect NCPs to undertake specific communications activities”.

NCPs were also identified as a major target audience for communication activities implemented by the Agency, as highlighted below. NCPs can be therefore considered both as implementing partners and as a target audience of communication activities implemented at Agency level.

Other actors indirectly involved in the provision of information about CEPOL and its activities are (as shown in Figure 2.51 below) police colleges/academies and police forces.

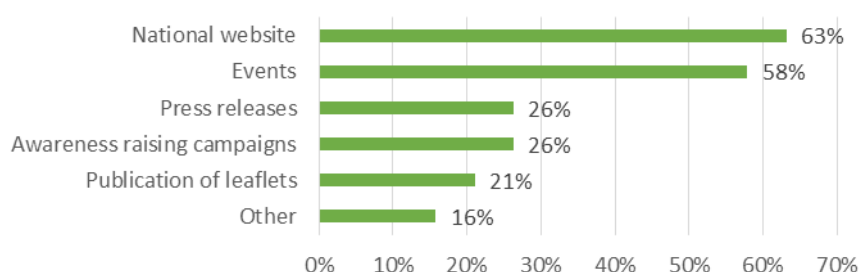
ICF survey data confirms that the NCPs are key actors involved in the dissemination of CEPOL’s information at national level. Seventy-six per cent of respondents to the NCP survey conducted in the context of this assignment confirmed that they were involved in external communication concerning CEPOL and its activities.

The NCPs regularly deliver a number of activities such as:

- Publishing the link to CEPOL’s website on the national police website;
- Disseminating training catalogues and CEPOL reports, usually through press releases;
- Using video conferences and webinars to ensure straightforward internal communication;
- Placing CEPOL banners in offices;
- Organising dissemination events;
- Publishing dissemination material.

Almost 70% of respondents to the ICF survey had organised more than one external communication activity. As illustrated by the figure below, in most cases, this consisted of advertising CEPOL on the national website (63% of respondents) or organising dissemination events (58% of respondents).

Figure 2.49 What kind of communication activities do NCPs usually organise?



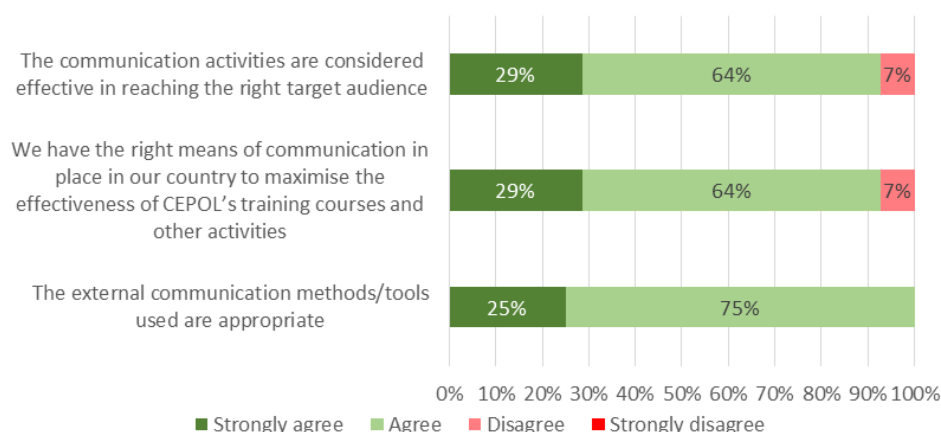
Source: NCPs survey 2015, N=19

To what extent were CEPOL's communication activities, with regard to learning and training activities and the EPEP, effective? Did communication activities reach and attract the right target audience?

In 2014 the budget allocated to communication activities at Agency level was €20,000. In 2015, the planned budget amounted to €130,000. A large part of the budget was allocated to the rebranding of the agency, including press and media activities. According to interviewees, the main issues in relation to the organisation of communication activities were the limited capacity of the Communication Unit and the consequent need for additional resources (human, financial).

Overall, CEPOL's communication activities were considered effective in reaching the target group. Most respondents also agreed that Member States were using the right means of communication to maximise the effectiveness of CEPOL's training courses and other activities, and that the existing communication activities were considered effective in reaching the right target audience. However, it is also important to note that 7% of respondents disagreed with these two statements.

Figure 2.50 NCPs' satisfaction with external communication



Source: NCP survey 2015, $N_1=14$, $N_2=14$, $N_3=16$

With regard to internal communication activities, as mentioned in section 2.7.3 above, they were judged to be effective overall by the stakeholders consulted in the context of this evaluation. Stakeholders also mentioned that good communication between the different CEPOL components had led to the effective implementation of activities on the ground (more information on the areas for improvement is also provided in section 2.7.3).

Some weaknesses concerning the effectiveness of external communication activities were also identified through consultation. Some of the stakeholders consulted provided a few suggestions for possible improvements, including:

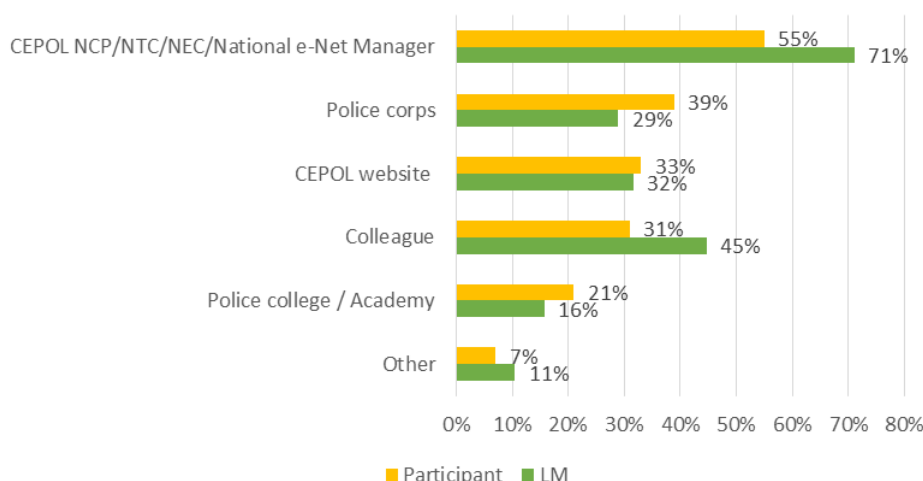
- Better investment in promotional material disseminated at national level by the NCPs;
- Further improve communication tools such as better management of Twitter and Facebook accounts and increased visibility of the website;
- Provide incentives to Member States to further strengthen and to promote CEPOL's activities. For example by financially supporting additional training and research activities organised within the Member States and possibly removing any obstacles to participation in CEPOL's learning activities; and
- Increase the visibility of CEPOL through the use of flags and logos in national police schools.

Evidence also shows that CEPOL could further invest resources in regularly updating its communication strategy. The 2012 Communications Strategy stated that it “should be seen as the starting point. It should be reviewed regularly to ensure that goals are being met and objectives are in line with CEPOL’s overall strategic goals and objectives”. However, the extent to which this strategy has been continuously updated during the evaluation period seems limited. No GB decisions were issues on this particular topic following the 2012 Communications Strategy. Particularly with the adoption of the new legal basis of the Agency (as also mentioned in the communication strategy), it will be necessary to review the communications strategy to keep it in line with the new strategic objectives of CEPOL.

What is the impact of CEPOL communication activities? To what extent is CEPOL known and visible to the relevant audiences?

Several interviewees noted an increase in CEPOL’s visibility throughout the evaluation period. Such improved visibility could be partially linked to the communication-related work carried out by the national CEPOL components. In fact, when asked how they found out about CEPOL, the majority respondents (71% of LMs and 55% of participants) referred to CEPOL’s national units.

Figure 2.51 How did participants and LMs find out about CEPOL?



Source: Participants and LM survey 2015^N Participants=168; N Line Managers= 38

Note: National training coordinator (NTC)

No additional information was gathered concerning the impact of CEPOL’s communication activities. In this regard, the evaluation notes that CEPOL could invest further resources in measuring the effectiveness of its communication activities. As highlighted by the 2012 Communications Strategy, CEPOL should aim to measure the following:

- Output: information/communications provided through effective means to target groups identified;
- Out-take: evidence that stakeholders have heard the messages and understood them; and
- Outcome: evidence of a change in behaviour.

While CEPOL regularly launches surveys aimed at evaluating its activities, it seems that they do not specifically focus on the impact of its communication activities.

3 Conclusions and recommendations

This section of the report provides a short summary of the main findings emerging from section 2 above and presents the main recommendations with regard to each evaluation criterion.

3.1 Relevance

The box below provides a summary of findings concerning the relevance of CEPOL.

Box 3.1 Findings concerning the relevance of CEPOL

While CEPOL's mandate has not changed since the 2012 study, in the last few years, it has been working towards complete alignment with new policy developments and has thus been increasing its relevance. CEPOL's mandate is currently under revision. The new regulation, which should enter into force by July 2016, confers on CEPOL the implementation of the LETS by conducting strategic training needs assessments and ensuring a common quality framework for law enforcement learning. The new legal basis responds to the call included in the Stockholm Programme to step up training on EU-related issues and to make them systematically accessible for all relevant law enforcement professionals.

Overall, CEPOL was found to be relevant to the training needs of the EU Member States in the field of law enforcement. The Agency has managed to adapt well to changes to the recent operational environment, for example, by integrating topics which have recently emerged as priority areas (cybercrime, irregular migration, etc.). The system put in place to identify training needs and compile the annual training catalogue enabled CEPOL to implement activities which were highly relevant to the national needs. The fact that national actors and EU-level stakeholders are involved in this system allows for the direct communication of current national needs, which are reflected in the Agency's activities.

The evaluation, however, also identified some areas for improvement. Firstly, with regard to learning and training activities, there is a need to further specify the topics and the expected profiles of the participants. Currently, the extent to which the course agendas provide details on the themes covered and set out the expected profile of participants varies from one activity to another. Secondly, the findings showed that the current procedure to approve learning and training activities implemented by CEPOL could be more flexible to allow for addressing ad hoc/urgent training needs.

Finally, some concerns were put forward about the relevance of the objectives and tasks of CEPOL (as stated in Articles 6 and 7 of Council Decision 2005/681/JHA) to law enforcement needs. Stakeholders increasingly perceived the strategic objectives defined in the 2005 Council Decision as outdated and limiting the relevance of the Agency. The new legal basis is currently under negotiation and the newly defined objectives are perceived as improving the relevance of CEPOL and its activities.

Keeping the findings illustrated above in mind, the following recommendations are put forward by this evaluation:

- Consultation at national level (within police forces and related agencies) could be organised more consistently across the EU. Currently, when undertaking the annual needs assessment, NCPs have the option of consulting police forces but not all of them undertake such a consultation. In this regard, there could be benefit in developing (for example, in the context of the currently developed methodology for the strategic needs assessment) a common approach to consultation (describing, for example, the recommended tools and techniques, processes, outputs and outcomes). This methodology could be shared with Member States who could apply the it (or part of it) and adapt it to their own national coordination systems;
- CEPOL's system for the identification of training needs could increasingly focus on the external dimension of training (e.g. with regard to civilian missions and capacity building in third countries) in line with the fourth strand of the LETS. This element could also be

further stressed in the currently developed methodology for the strategic needs assessment (developed by the Commission); and

- With regard to learning and training activities, agendas could further specify the topics covered and the expected profile of the participants (the type of work they are engaged in, years of experience, etc.). This will be particularly important in view of the broadening of CEPOL's target groups following the adoption of the new legal basis. Moreover, Member States could invest further resources in screening applicant profiles to ensure that the participants meet the profile described in the agenda. A template could be developed, for applicants to provide more information on their profile and expectations. Such a document would be checked by the sending organisations prior to giving the green light for attendance. Finally, CEPOL could include, in its evaluation framework, an assessment of the "quality" of participants and of the performance of Member States in ensuring that the correct profiles were put forward for learning activities.

3.2 Coherence and complementarity of CEPOL

The box below provides a summary of findings concerning the coherence and complementarity of CEPOL. The analysis looked both at external and internal aspects of coherence and complementarity.

Box 3.2 Findings concerning the coherence and complementarity of CEPOL

There is no major overlap between CEPOL's and nationally organised learning and training activities for law enforcement officials. Even if courses tackle the same topics, the content and focus of the activities are complementary. Good cooperation between national authorities and CEPOL was considered an important success factor to ensuring coherence and complementarity. The new regulation on CEPOL is likely to further improve complementarity between CEPOL and national authorities.

Concerning complementarity and coherence with activities carried out by other EU bodies, over the last five years (since the last CEPOL evaluation), coordination and therefore complementarity with Europol has improved, but some overlaps are still occurring in practice with Frontex. Progress has also been made in aligning the business plans of the different agencies: CEPOL has been made responsible for coordinating the JHA Training Matrix, a tool which aims to enhance awareness and coordination between JHA agencies. The latter was considered to be a useful tool for structured exchange of information and coordinated planning in training and knowledge exchange between JHA agencies.

The new regulation for CEPOL will further address potential overlaps in training between EU agencies as Article 3(1) states that CEPOL shall support, develop and coordinate training for law enforcement officers. However, it is more likely that the overlaps identified will be (better) addressed through operational cooperation and tools such as the JHA Training Matrix.

The internal coherence of CEPOL has improved since 2010. The better division and streamlining of the thematic areas covered, the enhanced use of webinars and LMS for courses were factors that were considered to have particularly contributed to the creation of synergies between the different learning tools. The number of thematic areas covered by training activities (courses, seminars and conferences) was reduced and synergies between the different learning and training tools developed by CEPOL were consolidated. However, there is further room for improving the extent to which CEPOL is able to offer a full learning cycle to participants.

The following recommendations are put forward by this evaluation:

- With regard to the coherence and complementarity with other EU-level activities:
 - The JHA Training Matrix should be further developed and implemented to move towards the joint planning of future activities. There would be also benefit in further synchronising the planning cycles of JHA agencies, which should in part be resolved by the introduction of the Single Programming Document. More consultation between the agencies should be carried out prior to the drafting of work programmes in order

to further reduce the occurrence of overlaps. In the long term, finally, the JHA Training Matrix could also cover activities organised by other actors and bodies (such as relevant training sessions organised by police academies on a bilateral or multilateral basis, the International Criminal Court, Interpol, etc.).

- Joint training activities and products amongst JHA agencies could be further developed in order strengthen synergies (as also pointed out in the JHA Training Matrix 2014 report). The Commission could further work on raising the awareness of the coordinating role of CEPOL in the area of training and of the importance of notifying the Agency of planned training activities for law enforcement.
- Cooperation between EU agencies, bodies and networks in undertaking the strategic EU law enforcement training needs analysis (undertaken every four years) and the regular training need analysis (undertaken on an annual basis) as highlighted in the LETS communication could be strengthened. While developing the methodology for the needs analysis, the Commission should ensure that the cooperation element is reflected.

■ With regard to internal complementarity:

- For certain topics/themes, CEPOL could put in place a more structured learning cycle. This could start with an e-learning activity, be followed by a webinar, continue with a residential activity and end with an exchange. Webinars and e-learning tools could be increasingly introduced to prepare for residential activities and used as “learning support tools”. Currently, a learning cycle is available (for some thematic areas) but it is left to individual choice rather than being an opportunity coordinated by CEPOL. A pilot project could be launched to test this approach. Finally, some guidance from CEPOL on this structured learning cycle could be provided to the Member States to help them raise awareness amongst (potential) participants of this possibility.
- In order to further focus on the core business/priorities, CEPOL could prioritise those learning and training activities that bring most EU added value (focusing on coordination and cooperation of LEAs in Europe, etc.) or those with innovative components (for example, new policing techniques, etc.) over basic knowledge courses (for example, on the functioning of JHA agencies, EU instruments, etc.). Member States could further take responsibility for organising basic knowledge courses (in line with strand 1 of the LETS) or for migrating them to online platforms. CEPOL could provide support to national authorities undertaking this.

3.3 Effectiveness and impact of CEPOL and its activities

The box below provides a summary of findings concerning the effectiveness of CEPOL.

Box 3.3 Findings concerning the effectiveness of CEPOL

Overall, the Agency has fulfilled the objectives as stated in its mandate over the evaluation period. The Agency has delivered against the goals and strategic objectives.

CEPOL improved its reach, during the evaluation period, particularly through better participation in residential activities as well as through the development of e-learning tools. Overall, the relevant/appropriate target audiences were reached by CEPOL although issues in relation to the appropriateness of the current target groups (as mentioned in Council Decision 2005/681/JHA,) were pointed out by the stakeholders consulted.

Participants in learning and training activities and the EPEP found them to be of high quality and were satisfied with the key training elements. Satisfaction rates have remained very high throughout the evaluation period. In addition, CEPOL activities were reported to be beneficial for the overall performance of participants and the newly gained skills could be applied on the job for the benefit of law enforcement organisations. With regard to learning and training activities, some minor issues were, however, encountered with the sharing/cascading of knowledge, which did not always happen. Some

areas for improvement were also identified with regard to the selection of participants to both learning and training activities and the EPEP. Evidence in fact showed that, in some instances, the profiles of participants were not fully matched (as their profiles were too broad). This might be linked to the fact that, as mentioned above, there are currently some inconsistencies in the extent to which the agendas of training courses provide details of the themes covered and set out the expected profile of participants.

With regard to the different learning tools developed by CEPOL, common curricula were considered to be the least effective activity implemented by CEPOL. Problems with the transposition of common curricula into national practice were encountered in the majority of Member States.

Overall, CEPOL activities are considered to be effectively implemented at national level, although some obstacles were identified, in particular with regard to a lack of capacity of NCPs as well as course managers and national exchange coordinators. The evaluation also identified major variations with regard to the presence of specific CEPOL roles across the Member States. This led to different tasks being carried out as well as to differences in outcomes across the EU. The evaluation identified a need for NCPs to be appropriately resourced to carry out the “basic task package” that is expected of them.

These obstacles, however, were not reported as having a serious impact on the achievements of the learning and training activities.

The following recommendations are put forward by this evaluation:

- Concerning the matching of appropriate participants to residential courses, the introduction of more detailed information about the topics covered by the single activities and the expected profile of the participants, as well as a more thorough screening of the profiles of applicants to ensure that the participants meet the profile described in the agenda (as indicated in section 3.1) should improve the issues currently encountered;
- With regard to the cascading of knowledge gained through participation in training and learning activities, the sending authority should strongly encourage participants to write a short report (summarising the main issues covered by the training activity) straight after event and another six months after the attendance (focusing on how the knowledge was used practically). Such reports would be disseminated within the unit and the police academy. The participants could also be asked to present the key points to their direct supervisors. In countries where this system has already been introduced (such as Greece), this has helped in further cascading the knowledge gained from participation in CEPOL activities as well as, indirectly, in improving the selection of participants (seeing the “reporting requirements”, only participants with a very high motivation apply for participating in learning and training activities). The cascading of knowledge should, however, not become a formal requirement for participants as this could act, over the long term, as a disincentive to applying;
- With regard to the national CEPOL components, NCPs could be invited by CEPOL to identify best practices within different aspects, such as the functioning of national coordination mechanisms, set-up/structure, communication amongst actors, tasks implemented, etc. The NCPs would consequently be invited to share such best practice with their counterparts during NCP meetings. CEPOL could support the national actors in identifying the annual themes or focus of the best practice, and compile manuals or reports (thus taking on a coordination role). This form of cooperation, which is inspired by the Open Method of Coordination (OMC), would contribute, in the long term, to reducing the variations in the quality of outputs/outcomes across Member States.

3.4 Efficiency

The box below provides a summary of findings concerning the efficiency of CEPOL.

Box 3.4 Findings concerning the efficiency of CEPOL

The Agency is assessed as very efficient. Over the evaluation period, the number of activities implemented by CEPOL increased when its financial resources and human resources remained broadly stable.

While efforts were made to optimise resources through a realignment of staff, the evaluation found that human resources at central level are not sufficient to undertake all the tasks entrusted to the Agency.

At national level, almost 40% indicated that they did not have sufficient financial resources available in order to fulfil all the tasks required.

CEPOL's budget implementation has improved over the last few years. This was in large part due to the establishment of the Finance Unit in 2012. A substantial part of the non-executed budget concerns operational funds, in particular grants to the Member States implementing the courses.

The evaluation noticed a downward trend in the cost of training and learning activities and the cost per participant, while the cost per participant in the EPEP varied greatly over the period.

Stakeholders considered that CEPOL delivered its training and other learning activities at a reasonable cost and that it provided value for money. The webinars were considered as the most cost-efficient way to deliver training. The EPEP was also considered to be one of the most effective activities of the Agency.

The introduction of the grant agreement system was considered to have led to greater efficiency. Stakeholders working with CEPOL called for improvements to be introduced in relation to streamlining and simplifying the administrative requirements linked to the system. However, the possibility of doing so is restricted by EU regulations (to which CEPOL has to comply).

In this context, the following recommendations are put forward by this evaluation:

- In order to improve cost-efficiency, Member States could take further responsibility for organising basic knowledge courses (in line with strand 1 of the LETS) or for migrating them to online platforms as further described in section 3.2 above.
- Within the Agency, there is a need to further strengthen human resources to ensure that CEPOL can undertake all the tasks it is entrusted with. This is particularly necessary in the context of the new mandate of the Agency, which provides for new tasks and a broader target group. In addition to the four FTEs needed in order to implement the European LETS and the additional FTE planned for the post of legal advisor (as already mentioned in the Proposal for a Regulation on CEPOL), another eight FTEs would be recommended to enable CEPOL to further increase the scale of its existing learning activities (e.g. online and residential courses, the EPEP), to successfully implement flagship activities such as the new master's course and to further coordinate training activities and needs assessments at EU level.

The additional FTEs required are based on the 2012 Impact Assessment study which estimated that CEPOL, following the revision of its legal basis and to fully implement the LETS, would require a total of 13 additional FTEs. One FTE of this estimate could be removed given that CEPOL will no longer organise the basic knowledge courses.

- Finally, with regard to the grant agreement process, CEPOL could introduce multi-annual agreements for both single Member States as well as for consortiums of Member States. The latter option would further help towards the pooling resources and contribute to efficiency gains.

3.5 The structure and governance of CEPOL

The box below provides a summary of findings concerning the structure and governance of CEPOL.

Box 3.5 Findings concerning the structure and governance of CEPOL

The issues concerning the lack of clarity in the role and responsibilities of NCPs (identified in previous evaluations) have been somewhat overcome. Overall, NCPs are satisfied with the guidance available describing their role, tasks and overall responsibilities.

While NCPs seem more positive (compared to previous reports) with regard to the clarity of guidance available on their role and responsibilities, evidence however shows that, similar to what was indicated in the 2012 report, there are big variations in the CEPOL organisational set-up at national level (with some NCPs being structured as a network while others are represented by one individual). This has led to different tasks being carried out and to differences in outcomes across the EU. The evaluation identified a need for NCPs to be appropriately resourced to carry out the basic task package that is expected of them.

The tensions identified in 2012 with regard to the peculiar structure of CEPOL (being an EU agency but acting as a network) seem to have dissolved.

Communication within CEPOL and cooperation amongst its different components was also judged as effective overall. As a result of efficient communication and cooperation, the Agency can successfully implement its mandate and effectively deliver its overall strategy and specific activities.

With regard to the adequateness of CEPOL's support in the delivery of activities, the majority of NCPs and FPs surveyed were satisfied with the extent and quality of support received.

The decision-making process through the GB has improved throughout the evaluation period. Some stakeholders still reported some (minor) issues with the decision-making process, such as decisions taken not having been implemented in a timely manner, or the volume and quality of the decisions made when using the written procedure, being questioned. The relocation was effected in a timely manner. Evidence gathered shows that the relocation had little to no impact on business continuity, despite the fact that a number of staff chose not to relocate to the new seat of the Agency.

The following recommendations are put forward by this evaluation:

- Concerning the set-up of the national CEPOL components, please see the recommendation included in section 3.3 above;
- With regard to the decision-making process, more regular use of video-conferencing facilities could be explored to complement the written procedures, in the case of urgent matters needing to be discussed by GB members.

3.6 Communication activities

The box below provides a summary of findings concerning the external communication activities implemented by CEPOL.

Box 3.6 Findings concerning external communication activities

The evaluation findings show that while the 2012 Communications Strategy was assessed as coherent and comprehensive (it includes clear objectives and messages, a good description of the target audiences and planned actions tailored to different target groups), there is room for improving the transparency in communicating how this strategy was developed in practice. Such information is currently not publicly available.

The 2012 Communications Strategy stated that it, "should be seen as the starting point. It should be reviewed regularly to ensure that goals are being met and objectives are in line with CEPOL's overall strategic goals and objectives". However, the extent to which this strategy has been continuously updated during the evaluation period seems limited. No GB decisions were issued on this particular topic following the 2012 Communications Strategy. Particularly, with the adoption of the new legal basis of the Agency (as also mentioned in the communications strategy), it will be necessary to review the communications strategy to keep it in line with the new strategic objectives of CEPOL.

Finally, the evaluation showed that, overall, CEPOL's communication activities were considered effective in reaching the target group and that Member States are currently using the right means of

communication to maximise the effectiveness of CEPOL's activities. However, the evaluation also noted that, currently, inadequate efforts are invested in measuring the effectiveness of CEPOL's communication activities. While CEPOL regularly launches surveys aimed at evaluating its activities, they do not appear to specifically focus on the impact of communication activities.

The following recommendations are put forward by this evaluation:

- CEPOL could further communicate on progress of implementation of its communications strategy. Such information could be published on the CEPOL website;
- CEPOL could invest further resources in regularly updating its communications strategy. While it is expected that a new strategy will be issued following the adoption of the new legal basis, it would be important to update the strategy on a bi-annual basis (in order to reflect contextual and strategic changes);
- CEPOL could also invest further resources in measuring the effectiveness of its communication activities. Such measurement/assessment could be done through online surveys targeted not only at participants (or potential participants) but also at national actors (NCPs, NPCs and FPs, etc.); and
- Finally, CEPOL could further explore the use of social media (especially Facebook and Twitter) to complement the more traditional forms of communication.

3.7 Horizontal recommendations

In addition to the recommendations identified above (organised according to the evaluation criterion), the evaluation also calls for improvements to CEPOL's monitoring system with regard to the learning activities. This would include increased clarity and consistency in reporting on the number and type of activities implemented annually by the Agency. As mentioned in section 1 of this report, the study team identified some inconsistencies in reporting the number of activities organised annually and the number of participants attending such activities, particularly when comparing the figures presented in different reports (e.g. Annual Reports and Annual Activity Reports). Moreover, in the Annual Reports, there is no explanation of what types of activities are included under the heading "learning & training activities" (thus creating difficulties in comparing the information with the training catalogue).

For future monitoring, CEPOL could consider introducing a more systematic classification and definition of its activities and groups of activities (for example, clarify what activities are specifically included in "learning and training activities" or "residential activities", etc.). Additional sub-categories could be introduced to, for example, classify the profile of the participants, their country of origin, etc.

The above would not only increase the accuracy of reporting on CEPOL's performance over a longer period, it will also assist in improved monitoring and evaluation.