



# **EVALUATION REPORT 2008**

## **CEPOL Courses, Seminars and Conferences**



# Evaluation Report 2008

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Edited by Janet Meli, Learning & Training Support Officer, CEPOL Secretariat  
Layout by Joanne Barnett, Communications Officer, CEPOL Secretariat  
Published Online: [www.cepola.europa.eu](http://www.cepola.europa.eu)  
Comments and contributions can be sent to: [evaluation@cepola.europa.eu](mailto:evaluation@cepola.europa.eu)



# Evaluation Report 2008

## *Introduction*

The Report aims to provide an overview of the evaluation outcomes of the CEPOL activities held in 2008. It describes the reporting status, the tools used for evaluation, followed by a presentation of findings, analyses and recommendations.

The state of play of Post-Course Evaluation for 2008 is also provided, with a presentation of the quantitative results, and the procedure for the further processing and reporting of the data collected during the year.

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## *1. Reporting on Training Activities*

A total of 87 activities were organised in 2008, with a total number of 2078 participants and 746 trainers.

Evaluation questionnaires are completed by participants and trainers at the end of the activity and returned to the Course Organiser, who in turn summarises these questionnaires and submits this summary as part of the Training Report of the activity to the Secretariat.

Evaluation reports were received for 78 of the activities, summarising evaluations from 1907 participants<sup>1</sup>, and 129 trainers.

Evaluation reports of the participants and trainers evaluation for the following 9 activities are not available to date and the outcome of these activities therefore could not be included in this Report:

- 3 Police Cooperation – Western Balkan, Slovenia  
(Evaluation not carried out - Conference)
- 17 Trafficking of Human Beings & Illegal Immigration, Belgium
- 20 Child Abuse, Poland
- 30 Public Order & Crowd Management Hooliganism, Poland
- 53d TOPSPOC Module 4, France (ENSP)
- 60 Information Seminar, Instruments & Systems of European Police Coop., UK
- 64 Information Seminar, Instruments & Systems of European Police Coop., France
- 90a Strategies against Child Abuse, Sweden
- 98 Counter Terrorism, UK

### *1.1 Evaluation Tools Used*

In 2008, new evaluation templates were developed. These were tested and used by organisers for the majority of the 87 CEPOL activities organised during the year. The new evaluation templates consist of two self-testified questionnaires to be completed by the participants and the trainers. These were used as follows:

<sup>1</sup> \* It is normal practice in CEPOL activities that organisers allow a dedicated time at the end of the activity where participants are given the evaluation questionnaire to complete. These are collected by the organiser before participants leave the classroom, ensuring that all questionnaires are completed and returned. With the new templates, in the *Organiser's Report Form*, organisers are asked to state how many completed questionnaires were collected. Therefore it is hoped that in 2009 the number of completed questionnaires will be known.



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*Course/Seminar Evaluation Questionnaire*, completed by **Participants** at the end of the activity, evaluating the following aspects:

- Organisation
- Learning & Content
- Experts and Trainers
- Topics
- Objectives
- Transfer of Learning
- Networking
- General Satisfaction

*Feedback from Trainers Questionnaire*, completed by **Trainers** at the end of the activity, giving their feedback on the following aspects:

- Time for preparation
- Information provided for contribution
- Target group
- Pre-course material
- Participant motivation
- Participants' language skills
- Post-course reinforcement

A number of activities were evaluated using the 'old' *Evaluation Form*, which the **Participants** completed at the end of the activity evaluating the following aspects:

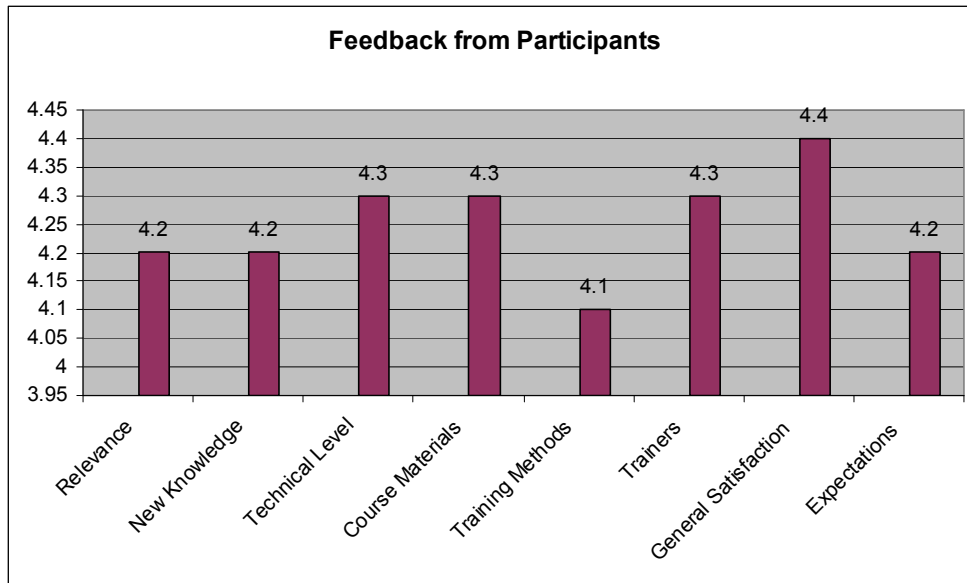
- General Satisfaction
- Expectations
- Technical level
- Training methods
- Course materials
- Trainers
- Relevance
- New knowledge
- Topics missed
- Distance learning as pre-study

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## 2. Presentation of Findings

### 2.1 Results from 'Old' Evaluation Form (completed by Participants)

(Questions with a Likert Scale 1-5, where 5 is highest)



- ◇ General Satisfaction 4.4
- ◇ Technical level 4.3
- ◇ Trainers 4.3
- ◇ Course materials 4.3
- ◇ Relevance 4.2
- ◇ Expectations 4.2
- ◇ New knowledge 4.2
- ◇ Training methods 4.1

The 'old' *Evaluation Form* was used in 9 activities with 190 participants. \*

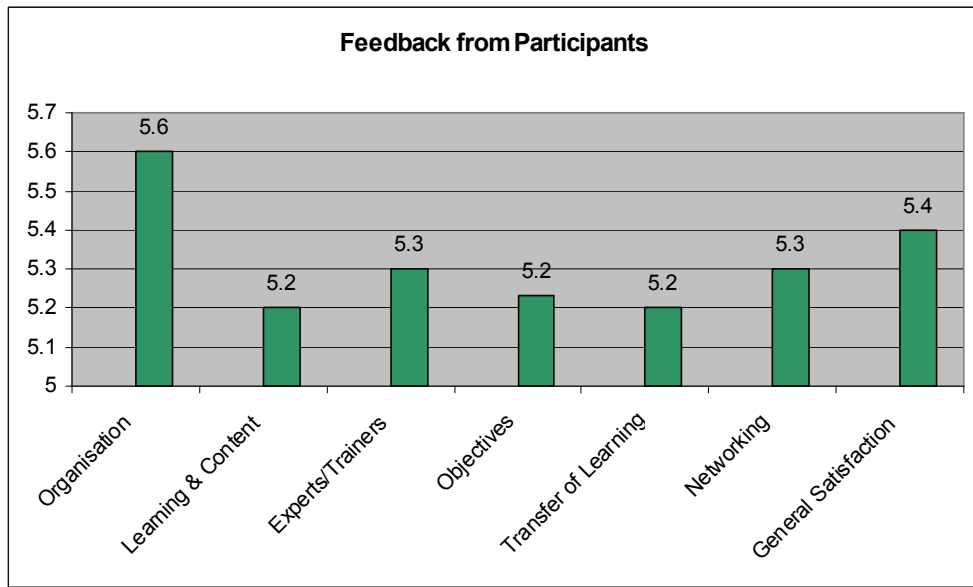
The new *Course/Seminar Evaluation* questionnaire was used in 69 activities, with 1717 participants.\*

\* It is normal practice in CEPOL activities that organisers allow a dedicated time at the end of the activity where participants are given the evaluation questionnaire to complete. These are collected by the organiser before participants leave the classroom, ensuring that all questionnaires are completed and returned. With the new templates, in the *Organiser's Report Form*, organisers are asked to state how many completed questionnaires were collected. Therefore it is hoped that in 2009 the number of completed questionnaires will be known.

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## 2.2 Results from new Course/Seminar Evaluation (completed by Participants)

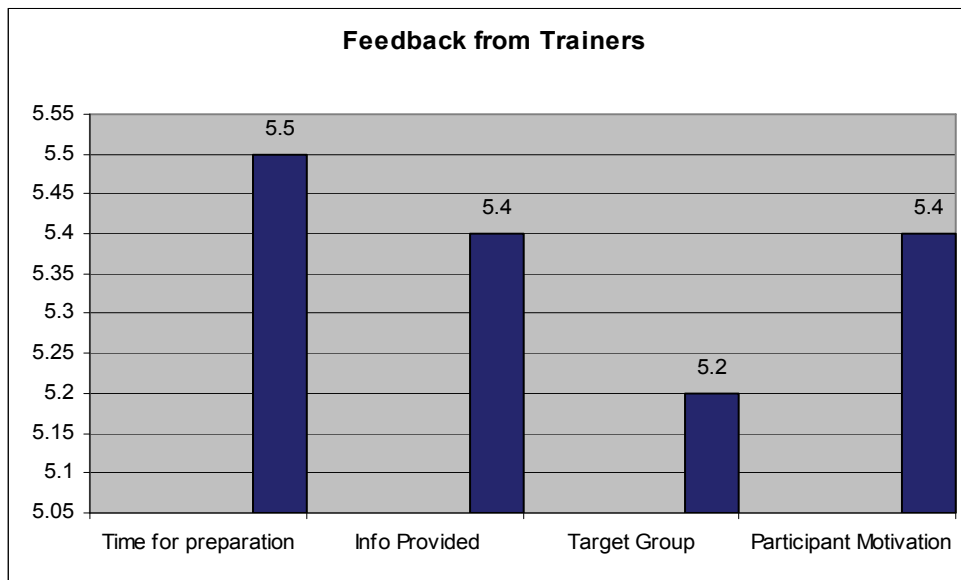
(Questions with a Likert Scale of 1-6, where 6 is highest)



- ◇ Organisation 5.6
- ◇ Learning & Content 5.2
- ◇ Experts and Trainers 5.3
- ◇ Objectives 5.2
- ◇ Transfer of Learning 5.2
- ◇ Networking 5.3
- ◇ General Satisfaction 5.4

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## 2.3 Results from Feedback from Trainers (completed by Trainers) (Questions with a Likert Scale of 1-6, where 6 is highest)



- ◇ Time for preparation 5.5
- ◇ Participant motivation 5.4
- ◇ Info provided for contribution 5.4
- ◇ Target Group 5.2

The *Feedback from Trainers* questionnaire was used in 37 activities, with 265 trainers. 129 trainers completed the questionnaire; a response of 49%.

## 2.4 Comments from Participants and Trainers

The total number of participants whose comments were forwarded to CEPOL Secretariat amounted to 1,750.

In addition to giving their score to the different areas of evaluation, both participants and trainers provided a rich amount of feedback through their comments, by which they could explain their rating, providing insight to the evaluation process, as to how the training activity could have served its purpose in a better way. This provides an opportunity for CEPOL course organisers to determine what lessons can be learnt in order to improve the outcome of future training activities.

The results from the ratings on each category should not be disregarded when reading the comments presented below. It must be emphasised that





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all areas evaluated are scored at the upper quartile of the rating scale.

Where written comments represent less than 20 participants these need to be seen in the light of an opportunity to recognise what issues need addressing to further improve the outcome of CEPOL activities, rather than an alarming situation. When this is the case, the number and percentage is not stated.

When comments are repeated by more than 20 participants, this information is presented in the report.

With regards to the trainers' comments, the percentage is worked out on 129 trainers, that is, the number of trainers whose completed questionnaires were included in the summary provided by the Course Manager.

The comments from the three questionnaires (the 'old' *Evaluation Form* and the new *Course/Seminar Evaluation* completed by participants, and the *Feedback from Trainers*), are grouped in the relevant criteria evaluated and presented below.

## *2.4.1 Organisation (Rating 5.6)*

The elements evaluated under the criteria 'Organisation' include organisation of the activity, programme balance (duration, sequence of topics, active/passive), and the logistic arrangements (transport, accommodation).

The high level of organisation in CEPOL courses was noted extensively by participants and so were the logistic arrangements. Participants appreciated the accommodation and being in the same facilities as this saved time and had a positive effect on the work. Several participants in one specific course did however comment on the bad acoustics in the training room.

More than 60 comments were made regarding the course programme; mainly that it was too heavy, and that the organisers tried to include too many topics and information to absorb in a short time. The need for more breaks was also highlighted, not only for pedagogical reasons but also for networking purposes.

More time for social activities and cultural visits were also suggested.

Repeated comments for more interactive sessions were noted by more than 50 participants.

## 2.4.2 Learning & Content (Rating 5.2)

The elements evaluated under 'Learning & Content' were relevance of information to the workplace, satisfaction of new knowledge gained, learning from contributions of other participants, participants' sharing of knowledge and experience, and pre-course assignments/material.

Participants found the training **relevant** to their work, although a few state that not all topics were relevant. More than 50 participants said that the training enhanced their understanding of the topic, gaining **new knowledge and insight** and more than 100 participants stated that they learnt mostly through the **exchange of information, experience and best practices** shared between participants on the activity.

Comments from participants show that pre-course material/assignments are appreciated as these enhance same entry level, prepare participants on what to expect from the course, save course time and induce more active participation. Some participants found it very informative and liked the guidance on how to prepare for the course.

More than 100 participants stated that they did not receive any **pre-course material**, which participants stated would have been beneficial. Some commented that it should have arrived earlier and another few commented that it was insufficient or unstructured.

Some participants noted that a number of participants lacked knowledge on the course topic and considered these as being the wrong target group. Some comments were also made on the mixture of backgrounds which did not match well for the learning process.

A few of the participants admitted that they could not share knowledge/experiences with others on the course due to their insufficient English language skills.

Suggestions were made to allow more time for participants to introduce themselves, their experiences and professional backgrounds and presentations from each about the topic in their country.

### Analyses:

The noted preference for more interactive ways of learning and that participants mostly gained knowledge and insights through exchange of experiences is rather significant and should be given due attention.

Also significant is the number of participants stating that they did not



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receive pre-course material. The benefits of pre-course material are known to Course Managers and are also highlighted in the participants' comments above. It would help participants and possibly affect the outcome of the course if pre-course material is provided.

### *2.4.3 Trainers & Experts (Rating 5.3)*

An appreciation of the trainers/experts was made, in terms of content, material and handouts, training methods/style and language used.

Participants found CEPOL trainers/experts as being very professional and well prepared. Trainers delivered clearly and were easy to follow and made the topics interesting. In addition, the content delivered was up-to-date.

On the other hand, participants expressed dissatisfaction with the imbalance between presentations and interactive sessions, stating their preference for more discussions and case-studies (34).

The quality of some of the presentations was also commented as being poor and often too long (45).

Participants also made repeated comments on the different quality of the trainers/experts and their dissatisfaction with some of the trainers in their style and methods used (43) as well as the poor language skills of some trainers (34).

### **Analyses:**

Although there is a general high satisfaction of the trainers, it will help future course organisers to have feedback on individual trainers. One way to obtain this is by having participants evaluate trainers individually – an evaluation form is provided by the Secretariat and is optional for organisers to use. The course organiser can also obtain feedback on individual trainers verbally from the organiser of the previous activity.

In the new *Organiser's Training Report Form*, applied for 2009 and used in the majority of the activities in 2008, organisers are asked to indicate the trainers they would recommend for future activities. This is important information for course organisers – another reason why the training reports of the previous course/seminar should be sought when planning for the new activity.

In addition, there may be a need for better communication between the Course Manager and the trainer prior to the course regarding the training methods and quality of presentations to be used.

## 2.4.4 Topics

Participants had the opportunity to comment on the topics they found beneficial and any topics they missed and recommend to be included in future courses/seminars.

This section provides a myriad of specific and very useful information for the organisers particularly for the future activity, as participants highlighted different aspects of the topics which they liked or recommended to be included in the programme and suggested ways how certain topics can be dealt with differently for more effective learning.

Some generic comments on what participants missed that can be highlighted include:

- ◇ Inclusion of more real cases to try and find more solutions;
- ◇ National experiences from other participants on the topic;
- ◇ Best practices and tools;
- ◇ Legislation, legal framework and structures of different Member States;
- ◇ Practical information on international police cooperation;
- ◇ The issue of information exchange between Member States and to explore problems encountered.

## Analyses:

The number of comments made by participants shows their strong engagement to contribute to the improvement of CEPOL courses. The participants' efforts in this regard should not be disregarded as these provide a good opportunity for Course Organisers to revise the content of the activity if they deem necessary.

## 2.4.5 Objectives (Rating 5.2)

Participants were asked how successful they felt the course/seminar was in meeting its stated objectives.

In 25% of the activities using the new evaluation questionnaire, course organisers did not list the objectives in the form prior to distributing it to participants. This resulted in the objectives not being evaluated by participants.

According to 18% of the participants from the remaining 52 activities the course objectives were largely achieved.

For an additional 7% of participants, the objectives were only partially met, highlighting those objectives which they felt were not achieved.



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Some participants commented that the objectives could only be measured after the last step/module.

### Analyses:

Course objectives are fundamental to the evaluation of an activity. The fact that the objectives were not listed by the Course Managers for 25% of the activities using the new questionnaire raises some concern. It is very important that Course Managers list the objectives in the questionnaire prior to distributing this to the participants. A note explaining this is also included in the '*Objectives*' section of the questionnaire.

Moreover, it is easier and more possible for the participants to rate an objective if this is described in a measurable way. The Secretariat is finalising an e-version of a learning programme on how to develop and write course objectives. This will be validated by the trainers of the Train the Trainers course and be evaluated by the participants of that course, who are all trainers. The programme will take 20 minutes to study. It is strongly recommended that Course Organiser/Managers involved in this process follow these guidelines.

There is also a need to explore the importance of evaluating objectives for all activities. It would help participants to realise their fulfilment of each activity in multiple step/module course if 'instructional objectives' for these can be specified.

### *2.4.6 Transfer of Learning (Rating 5.2)*

The criteria evaluated here were the participants' anticipation of using the outcome of the course/seminar in their work and whether they think that the outcome will be beneficial to their organisation.

170 participants claimed that they will **apply** techniques and strategies learned from the course in their job. Others stated that the knowledge and insight gained will have an **influence in their job**.

Some participants claimed that they will **share and cascade** the outcome of activity with others in their organisation and will inform authorities where applicable.

Some participants stated that they will be able to apply the knowledge gained with some practice and further study, while some others foresee that they will use it in future. Some stated that they now know where to obtain information on a European level. Some participants stated that they will use the CEPOL training in their national training programmes.

Some participants commented on the use of contacts and **professional network** made and that this will facilitate their work and enhance European police cooperation.

For a small minority the training was not applicable to their main duties, but knowledge gained will be used in international cooperation. Some stated that they cannot apply what they learned in their organisation, but learned a lot about the CEPOL network.

More than 160 participants stated that the Organisation will benefit through the sharing and cascading of the knowledge gained, through their use of the outcome of the course and via training conducted nationally on the topic.

Others stated that they will take many ideas back to the organisation, bringing in knowledge gained from the CEPOL activity into discussions and meetings preparing strategic and tactical plans at work, thus increasing the **knowledge base of the organisation**, possibly resulting in changing course of action. Almost 50 participants expressed this view. Some participants also estimated that the network of European colleagues will enhance international cooperation.

Some participants stated that they will try to implement and get others on board, but felt it will not be easy as police organisations are often reluctant to change. Others hoped to have the support of their chiefs to apply it but could foresee internal obstacles such as limited financial resources.

Some stated that systems and problems differ in every organisation and that the course should be more expansive as it does not reflect the needs of national police.

### Analyses

The comments on transfer of learning are predominantly positive, with the majority indicating that participants anticipate that they will apply, share and cascade what they have learned in the course.

Some comments, albeit minor, indicate that a number of participants seem to expect CEPOL training to address national police needs. Course organisers could make more emphasis that the nature of CEPOL training is European, to avoid false expectations and disappointment.



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### *2.4.7 Networking (Rating 5.3)*

Participants were asked whether the other participants on the course/ seminar can be potential partners in their professional work.

Almost 130 participants commented positively, stating that networking with other colleagues was one of the most interesting outcomes of the course, presenting a great opportunity to build trust, commitment and friendship with colleagues, which facilitates the exchange of information. Contacts will be useful for exchange of information, a joint approach or simply for advice. Some already have plans to work closely together, while some others have already exchanged information. Although every country deals differently with problems, it is possible to enhance cooperation mechanisms and share good practice.

Participants commented that the other colleagues had different functions, but they were in contact and could have the opportunity to cooperate at some point.

Other participants did not believe they could establish a network with the colleagues on the course, due to the different functions, different cultures and language barrier.

### *2.4.8 General Satisfaction (Rating 5.4)*

Criteria evaluated were participants' expectations met and their overall satisfaction of the activity.

Participants were generally highly satisfied with CEPOL activities and had their expectations met. Comments show satisfaction with knowledge gained, acquiring a better understanding of the function of the different European bodies, systems and structures in other countries, learning from sharing of knowledge, experience and best practices with colleagues, and described the courses as a great opportunity for networking.

Some comments highlighted the difficulty to meet everyone's needs due to the different backgrounds of participants on the course. Preference to dealing with real and actual police issues, rather than remaining on a theoretical level, was also expressed.

## EVALUATION FROM TRAINERS

129 Trainers and experts answered the evaluation questionnaire.

## *2.4.9 Time for Preparation to Trainers (5.5)*

Trainers were asked to rate and comment on whether they were invited to contribute to the CEPOL activity at an adequate timeframe to have enough time to prepare for their contribution.

Trainers appear to be highly satisfied with the time they are given to prepare for their contribution. A number of trainers expressed some dissatisfaction with the time given for preparation and expressed that a little more time would be helpful to allow for improve learning material, while some others said they were informed rather late, which hampered both preparation of content and logistic arrangements. It was also stated that last minute amendments to the programme unfortunately affected their contribution.

## *2.4.10 Information Provided to Trainers (5.4)*

Trainers were asked to rate and comment on whether the information provided to them on what was required of them was clear in terms of target group, content, time and link with other topics dealt with in the course/seminars.

Again, trainers' rating on this aspect was very high. The majority of the trainers stated that they had clear information on what was required of them. However, only 3 trainers stated that they were involved in the preparatory meeting.

19% of the trainers experienced some difficulties, as listed below:

- ◇ Participants were not familiar with the common curriculum, contrary to what the trainer thought
- ◇ The content delivered was different to what was communicated to participants in the programme
- ◇ Participants appeared to want more on the topic from a different perspective than the trainer was prepared for
- ◇ Trainers did not have the overall context of the course
- ◇ Trainers expected to have the participants' professional background included in the list of participants as this would have helped them to target their presentation to the audience
- ◇ The trainer thought it would be useful to be informed about the number of participants
- ◇ There was some in-house miscommunication





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- ◇ The trainer did not get the breakdown of the modules and sub-modules
- ◇ The trainers did not have enough time to deliver the topic or had to shorten the presentation at short notice
- ◇ The link with other topics could be improved with a proper pre-course briefing
- ◇ The trainer was not informed about the focus from Common Curriculum to e-learning and thus did not update the training material accordingly
- ◇ Despite requests, the trainer did not get the other speakers' papers in advance and this would have helped them to update their presentation accordingly

### Analyses:

The above comments from trainers show that the necessary information for trainers to prepare their contribution in an optimal way is, for almost 20% of the trainers, not being delivered or obtained.

- ◇ There is room for improvement in this area and more proactive action can be taken. The *Guidelines for Trainers/Experts* as well as the *Guidelines for Course Managers* can be revised to reflect the requirement to address these issues, and ensure that the guidelines in both these documents are followed.

### 2.4.11 Target Group (5.2)

Trainers provided their feedback on whether participants were the right target group and if not, how this affected the process of learning.

The rating and comments from 30% of the trainers show that generally the participants were the right target group: this could be observed from the active participation in the practical exercises carried out and the relevant questions asked leading to fruitful discussions.

More than 20% of the trainers however expressed the following concerns regarding the target group:

- ◇ There was a mix of unmatched backgrounds
- ◇ Some presentations were not relevant to all participants
- ◇ Some participants lacked knowledge on the topic

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- ◇ Some of the participants were not the right target group – this slowed the process of learning and caused frustration in the group
- ◇ ‘Senior officer’ has different meaning in different countries and this meant that not all in the audience were of the required level
- ◇ Could not determine if participants were the right target group
- ◇ Some participants have attended several CEPOL courses which makes one wonder what field of expertise these people really have (Alumni Seminar)

## **Analyses:**

The results show that the target group can be given more attention in the selection process by Member States. This has been commented by more than 20% of the trainers and also considerably noted by participants. This important issue needs to be discussed as to what measures can be taken that can ensure the right target group to attend CEPOL activities.

### *2.4.12 Pre-course Material/assignments (Trainers)*

Trainers were asked to state whether they provided the participants with pre-course material/assignments/reference to literature, and if they judged the participants were well prepared.

26% of the trainers said that pre-course material/assignments/references were provided and 19% stated that participants were well prepared though at different levels, some of them adding that possibly insufficient language skills with some participants impaired their preparedness.

24% of the trainers stated that they had not provided any material in advance.

In a few cases it was commented that the topics were sensitive and trainers preferred not to send material via internet.

Some trainers expressed that although no pre-course material was sent, the participants were prepared enough with their experience in the field, while another group of trainers observed a lack of knowledge on the topic.

Another group of trainers stated that they did not know if the material was sent to participants in advance.

## **Analyses:**

Having almost a quarter of the trainers not sending any pre-course



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materials is rather high. This could be highlighted to the Organisers to have this issue addressed also with the trainers.

### *2.4.13 Motivation of Participants (5.4)*

Trainers provided feedback on the participants' level of motivation and how these took active part in the learning process.

The rating on participants' motivation can be considered to be very good. Comments from trainers show that the participants showed strong interest and actively participated during the discussions, posing relevant questions which provoked fruitful discussions. Participants approached trainers with questions during breaks and discussions continued during evening hours. Positive feedback also followed from the participants.

Methods used by trainers to motivate participants were by responding to their individual interests and by including workshops to encourage active participation, during which trainers observed that participants were committed and the results of the workshops reveal their active involvement.

A small group of trainers could not judge participants' motivation while another group of trainers expressed concern.

Trainers expected more questions and discussion after the presentation and although participants appeared to be listening their level of understanding was questioned by the trainers; only some participants showed active participation and some participants even left during the workshops or went to the internet; a trainer also commented on the rather individualistic attitudes by some participants which had an impact on the process.

### **Analyses:**

The participants' rating of 5.4 on general satisfaction of CEPOL activities is in line with the above trainers' rating on participants' level of motivation above.

The strong appeal for more interactive training expressed by participants, however, cannot be disregarded and needs to be taken into account as this has a direct effect on participants' motivation and on the learning outcome of the activity. This request by participants was also noted in the 2007 evaluation results.

It is important that Course Managers address any undesirable behaviour' by

participants, as very often this has a negative influence on the rest of the group and can have an impact on the process of learning.

#### *2.4.14 Participants' Language Skills (Trainers)*

Trainers were asked to state whether there were any language barriers with any of the participants and if so, how this was managed.

34% of the trainers stated that there were no language barriers, while 19% claimed that there were barriers. 47% did not answer this question.

The trainers who stated that there were language barriers, highlighted the following main problems:

- ◇ Some participants may have understood the content, but found it difficult to participate in discussions
- ◇ Participants' fluent in English not giving enough time to others not fluent to express themselves
- ◇ It was a problem to include everyone in the discussions
- ◇ Some participants did not have an adequate level of the English and they needed an enormous amount of help and could not follow all guest speakers
- ◇ There were participants who could not speak or read a single word in English, which raises doubt as to the benefit of attending the seminar

Trainers used the following techniques to manage these problems:

- ◇ In workshops, facilitators made sure these participants were given time and space to contribute
- ◇ Worked with a lot of brain writing in addition to verbal tasks and asked participants for feedback so everyone had the time to express themselves
- ◇ Slides prepared in simple English and spoke slower and clearer during presentations and workshops so all participants could understand
- ◇ Checked understanding by prompting
- ◇ Grouped them with colleagues of same nationality so support could be given



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- ◇ Used group/pair/team work extensively to help participants feel more at ease

It was commented that this problem cannot be handled individually by trainers and that the most effective way to manage this would be to stress the necessity of adequate language skills and to make the nominating police organisations aware of this necessity.

### **Analyses:**

The fact that almost half of the trainers did not respond to the question on whether there was a language barrier with any of the participants, leaves room to question why this question was omitted.

If they thought that there was no barrier, it is safe to assume that they would have had no trouble to answer the question. This assumption leads to an indication that these trainers (61) either could not tell, because they just delivered their presentation and left, or were not sure, as it is in fact not easy to determine this unless trainers try to involve everyone in the discussions.

This of course raises concern as to the active participation of participants and creating the environment for this, which has an impact on learning.

Having 36% of the trainers who answered indicating a language problem is rather high and raises concern.

The selection of officers with the right level of language skills should be ensured by both the sending organisation as well as the Organiser, if a benefit from the outcome of the activity is to be achieved. One must not forget that besides the wasted resources for the sending organisation, having a participant with insufficient language skills for the activity is bound to have an impact on the group, the trainer, and the learning process in general.

### ***2.4.15 Post-Course Reinforcement (Trainers)***

Trainers were asked to state what plans were made for post-course learning reinforcement on the topic.

One third of the trainers planned learning reinforcement by providing additional information sources to participants and additional material followed with updates, reference to upcoming events on the topic, providing participants with a copy of their presentation for future reference,

encouraging further reading on the topic, and exchanging business-cards/ distributing contact lists with the aim that participants keep in touch and future contact with trainers/lecturers will be made. Some trainers gave assignments or encouraged further exploration of the topic to be exchanged and discussed via discussion forum and chat.

Participants were encouraged to use the tools available in EU and to share information with other colleagues when needed. Information sources were exchanged to facilitate follow-up and further research on the topic.

Some trainers said there was a commitment by participants to continue to work on the topic; attention to learning points was drawn to individual participants during group sessions relevant to their field of expertise.

Some trainers stated that the second step/next module will reinforce learning on the topic, and the interim assignment with objectives to be met before then will also serve as reinforcement.

23% of the trainers did not plan for learning reinforcement, some claiming that plans for post-course learning were not required. Others stated they did not know if plans were made but that it should be taken into consideration in future courses, with another group stated that this was a matter for CEPOL organisers and the participants' own initiative.

### **Analyses:**

Having almost a quarter of the trainers not giving attention to post-course learning is rather high and concerning. The concept that post-course learning creates an opportunity to continue learning while providing support and contact in the process seems to require some emphasis.

Inter-module assignments between multi-module and two-step activities are very good examples of such learning. Alumni seminars, where a forum open to past participants of a topic is provided to further discuss the topics with updated information, could be reconsidered and explore how this can be improved and made workable.

### ***2.4.16 Suggestions for Future Courses/seminars (Trainers)***

Both the participants and the trainers were asked to give their suggestions on how future courses/seminars could be improved.

Suggestions made are largely specific to the activity, including suggestions to prolong certain courses to allow for more depth in discussions and suggested changes in dealing with the topics. These suggestions should



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be very useful to the organiser and for the preparation of future courses.

The following are some generic suggestions made, followed by course-specific suggestions that are relevant for further considerations:

### *From Participants:*

A number of participants suggested including more interactive learning activities, such as workshops, practical exercises; discussions; case studies, having each participant to present a case on their own country.

Suggestions on which trainers/experts should be invited next time for the course were also made.

Some participants commented on the target group, suggesting clearer course objectives be provided to attract the right target group on the course.

Others, attending different activities suggested organising two different courses, one more basic and one advanced, making the activity more efficient and relevant for all, targeting the activity to the right target group.

Some participants proposed organising a follow-up seminar to discuss and share what has been implemented after the course, problems encountered and successes recorded.

More time for cultural visits was also suggested.

### *From Trainers:*

Trainers suggested that countries should be encouraged to pay more attention to the described target group when selecting officers to attend CEPOL courses. It was also suggested that experts from external bodies outside the police on the topic should also be invited.

It was commented that the amount of participants for an interactive seminar should not be more than 20 participants and more attention should be given to the physical training environment – a less formal setting would have encouraged more participation from the participants.

Some trainers suggested to distribute the course material to participants in advance so they can be better prepared, particularly the Common Curriculum as participants did not know about the Common Curriculum on the topic, as well as that information about the e-learning module on Police English should be provided to trainers before the activity.

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It was also suggested that, as part of the preparation for the course, participants could be asked to write a short paper on the situation in their country in relation to the topics dealt with in the course, which could be distributed to all as pre-course material.

A recommendation that trainers could attend the course and listen to other trainers before their own presentation was made, in order to enable fine-tuning and coordination of topics delivered.

The importance that the Course Manager should be present during group work and discussions to solve any arising problems was also suggested.

Another suggestion was made that organisers should make sure that trainers include workshops in their session as this encourages more active participation by participants.

It was commented that some participants seem to miss the link of a two-step course, suggesting that there is not enough understanding that the second step mainly consists of participants' contribution and that this should be better communicated.

It was also noted that a lot of new ideas are brought forward on the topics dealt with and these should not go to waste but should be taken into account when preparing content for future courses.

Another suggestion was to make use of the course outcome by having participants prepare a paper with the outcome of the course and submit it to CEPOL through the line manager to build up a knowledge bank of good practices.

## Course Specific

- *Crime Intelligence & Risk Assessment and Intelligence led Policing.*  
Organise the activity as a two-step course with an interim assignment
- *Trafficking in Human Beings & Illegal Immigration.*  
Divide the two topics into two different seminars. It was explained that these two topics are in fact two distinct areas of crime, much different and connected only by the fact that in some cases victims of trafficking are also illegal immigrants. The two crime areas are often confused and organising this seminar with the two subjects together can be quite confusing.  
(Comment made by trainer following numerous complaints made on the subject by participants.)





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- *Strategies against Child Abuse:*  
'Child abuse' and 'child pornography' should be dealt with separately in different courses.

### **Analyses:**

The suggestion that the seminar on THB & Illegal Immigration is divided into two seminars for each topic is highlighted both by participants and the trainers. It should be noted that this suggestion was also emphasised in the 2007 evaluation report of the activity.

These suggestions/proposals provide useful information for the organisers of CEPOL activities as well as for the yearly programme planning.

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## 3. Post-Course Evaluation

For the first time since its inception, CEPOL can report on the effectiveness of its training in the workplace. In 2008, CEPOL carried out post-course evaluation.

Post-Course questionnaires were sent out by the Secretariat to all participants 3-6 months after the activity, who returned the completed questionnaire to the Secretariat for processing. The overall response is 42%.

Post-course evaluation for the following activities in 2008 was not carried out for the reasons indicated:

*European Dimension Conference (99/2008)* – conferences are not evaluated

*Seminar for NCPs (102/2008)* - governance activity, not a course

*Police Science and Research Conference (70/2008)* – conference (as above)

*JIT (09/2008)* – to be sent out after June 2009

The following tables show the results based on a sample of a third of the responses received as at 27 April 2009 for each activity.

These results are therefore subject to change. The sample was selected randomly, every n<sup>th</sup> respondent as occurring on the address list in the email sent out to all participants for the activity.

### Post-Course Evaluation Results

Period Evaluated: Jan-Dec 2008		Responses Processed: 174	
Criteria evaluated (see Annex D for full questionnaire)	<i>Strongly Agree</i> – <i>Agree</i>	<i>Slightly Agree</i> – <i>Slightly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i> – <i>Strongly Disagree</i>
Course aims achieved	81%	18%	2%
Able to apply learning outcome	78%	21%	1%
Professional network maintained	39%	41%	20%
Perceived relevance of the training activity	81%	18%	2%



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92% continued learning after the activity as follows:

62%	By re-reading course material(s)
49%	By researching the topic(s) further to broaden knowledge
78%	By discussions with others on the subject
19%	in other ways

96% shared knowledge and experiences gained from the activity as follows:

70%	With line manager(s)
87%	With colleagues
64%	With staff
32%	With others

A summary of the questionnaires for each activity, including the comments made by participants, is presently being sent to the respective NCP for course organisers' information and comments. This summary, together with the Organiser Training Report on the activity, will be made available to the next organiser of the activity.

### Analyses:

The information gathered from post-course evaluation shows that 78% of CEPOL attendees feel able to apply the training in their organisation.

A very high percentage of officers are sharing what they have learnt with line managers, staff and predominantly with colleagues in their organisation. This is a very important finding, as sharing and cascading CEPOL training is one of the main objectives for CEPOL.

However, only approx. 40% of the officers are networking across Europe with other organisations.

According to the results, 20% of the participants are actually not using the contacts made during the activity and another 40% are using it in a limited way. This is alarming as this is one of the most important objectives of CEPOL activities. This contrasts greatly with the average rating of 5.3 out of 6 on participants' anticipation for networking with the colleagues on the course.

On the other hand, more than 90% of CEPOL course participants are



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continuing learning on the topic, predominantly by discussing the topic with others. This is very positive indeed and removes concern expressed from the findings in the course-end evaluation that 23% of the trainers do not seem to give attention to post-course reinforcement.

The results also show that 3-6 months after the activity, more than 80% of the participants find the training relevant and claim to have achieved the course aims.

With the exception of *networking*, and to some extent the post-course reinforcement, the results of the post-course evaluation compare well with the results from the course-seminar evaluation carried out at the end of the activity by participants and trainers.



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## *4. Effectiveness of the New Evaluation Tools*

### *a) Course/Seminar Evaluation Questionnaire:*

The main improvement in this questionnaire, compared with the 'old' evaluation form, is the level of detail in the information collected. Areas evaluated are grouped into main categories, facilitating the presentation of results. The level of detail in the information provided under each item in these categories present an opportunity for organisers to determine which areas went well and what needs to be improved.

Another major improvement is the measuring of the course objectives, which are listed individually for participants to rate them separately. In this way, both course organisers and trainers can determine where improvement is required for the next activity.

### *b) Daily Feedback Form:*

Although this template is not obligatory, a number of course organisers have applied it. As anticipated, this brings invaluable information for the next organiser on the performance of trainers. This information could also be made available to the relevant trainers, when solicited, providing useful feedback for the individual trainer concerned.

Since this yearly report presents and discusses only global evaluation results, the evaluations of individual trainers are not reflected here. This information is mainly useful for the organiser of the activity, the next organiser and the trainers.

### *c) Feedback from Trainers Questionnaire:*

This is a newly developed questionnaire used for the first time in 2008. A response of 50% is considered positive and the information provided by the trainers/experts proved to be very useful.

Comments provided by trainers will help Course Managers to gauge what trainers' expectations are and how these can be addressed, how the flow of information can be improved between the Course Managers and the trainers, and what requirements from trainers need to be better communicated.

Suggestions put forward by trainers for the improvement of the activity are



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useful and bring added value to the evaluation of CEPOL courses, as these comments and suggestions are coming from experts in the field.

A number of the questions in the questionnaire used in 2008, as tested by the Organisers, were open-ended questions and although they still bring in important information, proved to be difficult to process statistically.

These questions have been reformulated to include a rating for statistical purposes and to facilitate the processing of data collected. The questionnaire for 2009 reflects these changes.

### *d) Post-Course Evaluation:*

Post-course evaluation is also a newly developed process applied in 2008.

The rate of response so far of 42% is encouraging. The information brought in proved to be very useful. The surprising result on *networking* is one example and gives rise to a discussion on how the network building can be emphasised and improved.



# Evaluation Report 2008

## *5. Conclusions and Recommendations*

The results from the participants' evaluation carried out at the end of CEPOL training activities clearly indicate a high level of satisfaction on all areas evaluated. The results show that CEPOL participants are departing with a 5.4 out of 6 satisfaction of the CEPOL training activity they attended.

The following are the main outcomes which require attention and discussion.

### *Objectives*

A number of comments made by participants indicated to specific objectives of the course not being met; this is useful information for course organisers as they can gauge what needs to be addressed in future courses and prepare trainers accordingly, where applicable.

The course objectives serve as a compass for trainers and experts and as a yardstick to measure the core success of the course by the organiser and the learning outcome by the participants. As such one can appreciate the importance that these are developed and written in a measurable way, as these have a direct impact on the validity of the evaluation of the activity.

An e-programme on how to develop and write objectives has been developed by the CEPOL Secretariat. **It is recommended that those involved in developing and writing course objectives use this tool.**

### *Daily evaluation*

A number of course organisers are applying the Daily Feedback. This provides useful information on the performance of trainers and is valuable for the next organiser. The comments put forward in this Report by the participants about the different appreciation and quality of the trainers highlights the value of evaluating trainers individually.

Considering the repeated comments from both participants and trainers, as is the case in the 2006 and 2007 evaluations, the **suggestion to divide the THB & Illegal Immigration Seminar into two activities** might be considered, tackling each topic individually.

Comments put forward by a quarter of the trainers gave rise to some concerns about the information flow between course managers and trainers as well as the extent of how much trainers are aware of their responsibilities.



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It is suggested that the *Guidelines for Trainers* and the *Guidelines for Course Managers* documents are revised to address the shortcomings from both organisers and trainers highlighted in this report.

Organisers are encouraged to obtain the evaluation report on the previous **activity** as this provides rich information on what went well and what were the lessons learnt.

These reports will be made available to the next organiser on CEPOL LMS, together with the post-course evaluation summary of the activity.

From the results shown in this evaluation, it is important that discussions are initiated to address the issues of *target group* and *networking*.



# **EVALUATION REPORT 2008**

## **CEPOL Courses, Seminars and Conferences**



CEPOL - European Police College  
CEPOL House  
Bramshill, Hook  
Hampshire  
RG27 0JW  
United Kingdom