

DECISION 12/2009/GB  
OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE EUROPEAN POLICE COLLEGE  
**ADOPTING THE POLICY PAPER - COMMON CURRICULA**

Adopted by the Governing Board  
on 26 May 2009

THE GOVERNING BOARD,

Having regard to Council Decision 2005/681/JHA <sup>(1)</sup>, and in particular Article 7(b) thereof;

Having regard to the proposal of the Training and Research Committee, submitted by Germany <sup>(2)</sup>;

HAS ADOPTED the Policy Paper – Common Curricula as detailed in the Annex.

Done at Český Krumlov, 26 May 2009

*For the Governing Board  
Helena Tomková  
Chair of the Governing Board*

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 256, 1.10.2005, p. 63.

<sup>(2)</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Training and Research Committee; item 5.4.3.

**EUROPEAN POLICE COLLEGE  
COMMON CURRICULA**

**POLICY PAPER**

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## **Preamble**

*CEPOL's purpose (2005/681/JHA, Art 5) is to help train senior police officers of the Member States by optimising cooperation between CEPOL's various components. Next to CEPOL's training activities in the framework of its annual Work Programme, the development and implementation of harmonised curricula for national implementation requires careful planning and commitment.*

*This Policy Papers addresses those actors in the Member States and within the CEPOL Network who will be in charge of the preparation and facilitation of implementation of the Common Curricula throughout all stages at present and in the future. It outlines 1) the circumstances which have made the development and implementation of harmonised police training curricula advisable and necessary, with particular reference to The Hague Programme and Council Decision 2005/681/JHA; 2) the way in which the Common Curricula can influence these circumstances, including its impact and the risks as well as prevention proposals; 3) recommendations for work procedures, task distribution and cooperation structures aiming at obtaining high level Common Curricula which address national as well as EU-wide needs. Special emphasis is put on the need for commitment by the Member States in this process as well as the need of awareness enhancement concerning CEPOL itself and its Common Curricula in the national police training institutions.*

## **1. Introduction**

The need for intensification of cross-border police cooperation within Europe is highlighted in The Hague Programme as one of its main objectives. CEPOL, as one of the agencies involved in contributing to the achievement of this goal, is urged to focus on measures on the level of police training. Similar standards and content of police training enable police officers from the Member States to cooperate across borders in a more effective and coherent way. As such, CEPOL's task to prepare harmonised programmes for the training of middle-ranking police officers, middle-ranking police officers in the field and police officers in the field with regard to cross-border cooperation between police forces in Europe, and help set up appropriate advanced training programmes as well as develop and provide training for trainers (2005/681/JHA, Art 7 (b)) is one important measure which has the potential of satisfying this demand.

## **2. Common Curricula: an instrument for improving cross-border police cooperation**

### **2.1 Harmonised Police Training as a joined approach**

In the light of the objectives of The Hague Programme, to "improve the common capability of the Union and its Member States (...) to fight organised cross-border crime and to repress the threat of terrorism"<sup>3</sup>, there is now a

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<sup>3</sup> The Hague Programme, Chapter I: Introduction

strong need for an effective joint approach on the level of combat and prevention. Consequently, as police training and education is fundamental for excellent policing, it is imperative to make sure that national police training on cross-border issues covers the same topics and ensures at least a similar level of instruction and training outcomes in all Member States.

Police Training is organised on a national basis, in accordance with the Subsidiary Principle. Where cross-border police cooperation is concerned police training and education acquire an extra dimension: *The skills, attitudes and knowledge of police officers have to be such that they capacitate them to work together with colleagues across national borders.*

The Common Curricula were conceptualised as an effort to contribute to the harmonisation of police training with the Member States while respecting national sovereignty with regard to the organisation and implementation of police training and education programmes. Within a wider scope, they aim at supporting the objectives of The Hague programme.

## **2.2 The wider scope: the Common Curricula and The Hague Programme**

Apart from fulfilling that article of the Council Decision which refers to the development of harmonised curricula itself, this undertaking is also conducive to other elements mentioned in The Hague Programme, and in the Council Decision.

It is presupposed that the Member States provide top-quality police training and education programmes facilitating excellence in policing. And yet, they may find it difficult to consider and include such issues and aspects which transcend national borders. Also, not every topic requires or receives the same attention in each country. The CEPOL Survey on European Police Cooperation indicates that certain topics “are listed as sufficiently represented only in a minority of programmes”<sup>4</sup>.

The Common Curricula shall have an added value for national police training and education programmes by responding to national needs and issues and at the same time providing an extra dimension addressing EU-related topics and desiderata.

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<sup>4</sup> “International Cooperation, Sexual Abuse and Exploitation, Integration Aspects and Refugees, Environment, Diversity, Trafficking of Human Beings and Money Laundering in Basic and in Advanced/Specialised Training”. (CEPOL Survey on European Police Education and Training, p. 51)

### 2.2.1 *On an integral level*

- The requirement of cooperation with other EU bodies<sup>5</sup> and the improvement of knowledge of international and Union instruments (EU institutions, Europol, Eurojust)<sup>6</sup> shall be addressed by including references to different legislation systems, treaties, action plans, decisions, all concerning the individual topic within the EU framework. Specific Curricula shall be dedicated to cooperation with the aforementioned EU agencies<sup>7</sup>.
- The use of good practice and police research findings will be an integral part of the Common Curricula<sup>8</sup> and shall be given particular consideration in the development process.
- The work on the Common Curricula will be closely connected with the content development of relevant e-learning modules<sup>9</sup>.
- Furthermore, The Hague Programme clearly outlines that intensified police cooperation on the EU level is of paramount importance for the effective combating of cross-border organised crime. European police cooperation is a CEPOL core topic, and thus an accordant Common Curriculum will be a primary task to fulfil.

### 2.2.2 *In detail*

- The EU's strategy to reinforce the combat against terrorism<sup>10</sup> will require high level training and education of police officers, in particular to contribute to measures listed in the EU Plan of Combating Terrorism, e.g. maximising the capacity within the EU bodies and Member States to detect, investigate and prosecute terrorists and to prevent terrorist attacks as well as enhancing the capability of the European Union and of the Member States to deal with the consequences of a terrorist attack<sup>11</sup>. Common Curricula on Counter-Terrorism and related topics<sup>12</sup> shall aim at addressing the training needs that arise from this circumstance.

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<sup>5</sup> Council Decision 2005/681/JHA, Art 8.1

<sup>6</sup> Council Decision 2005/681/JHA, Art 6.2; see also The Hague Programme, Chapter III, Art 2.3

<sup>7</sup> E.g. Europol, European Police Cooperation and other related topics

<sup>8</sup> Council Decision 2005/681/JHA, Art 7(e)

<sup>9</sup> See CEPOL GB Decision 22/2008/GB, Art 3.4

<sup>10</sup> The Hague Programme, Chapter III, Art 2.2, p. 8-9

<sup>11</sup> EU Plan of Combating Terrorism, p. 5

<sup>12</sup> E.g. Money Laundering, Civilian Crisis Management and other related topics

- Internal security as an “essential complement” of the European security strategy<sup>13</sup> extends the national space to a European one. Police Training with a focus on a European approach will help to enhance professional policing in this sector<sup>14</sup>.
- The importance of strengthening a trans-national approach “combating illegal drug trafficking and of precursors and money laundering” is addressed in The Hague Programme<sup>15</sup>. Here, Common Curricula are required which address these topics involving a cross-border dimension.
- The Hague Programme highlights the obligation of the European Union to protect human rights and fundamental freedom<sup>16</sup>. This includes the security of its citizens and their trust in the law enforcement system, but also the fight against violence, promotion and protection of women and child rights<sup>17</sup> and the fight against illegal employment<sup>18</sup>. The choice of Common Curricula topics will pay tribute to this obligation as well<sup>19</sup>.

Other objectives of The Hague Programme as well as elements of CEPOL’s tasks can be addressed by Common Curricula on accordant topics to be decided.

### 3. Impact and risks

#### 3.1 Impact

The purpose of CEPOL’s Common Curricula is to *provide recommendations for national police training on specific subjects with a European dimension* for implementation within national police training systems in accordance with national and EU-wide needs. They are also provided as basic ideas and elements for courses and seminars within CEPOL’s annual Work Programme. The subjects of the Curricula are determined by the CEPOL Governing Board in line with given priorities on the European level, in particular with The Hague Programme.

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<sup>13</sup> The Hague Programme, Chapter II, Art 2.4, p. 10

<sup>14</sup> E.g. Civilian Crisis Management

<sup>15</sup> The Hague Programme, Chapter III, Art 2.8, p. 11; see also EU Drugs Action Plan 8652/1/05 REV 1

<sup>16</sup> The Hague Programme, Chapter II, Art 2

<sup>17</sup> Action Plan Implementing The Hague Programme 9778/05, Art 1.2, referring to the Daphne Programme

<sup>18</sup> The Hague Programme, Chapter III, Art 1.4

<sup>19</sup> E.g. Police Ethics and Prevention of Corruption; Management of Diversity; Trafficking Human Beings; Domestic Violence and other such topics

### **3.1.1 *National needs and European Dimension***

In order to provide a European dimension in police training the following aspects will have to be involved:

- the police training need is of a Europe-wide or trans-national nature;
- the common approach to such training provides important advantages at a trans-national level, such as determining and exchanging good police practice as well as reinforcing mutual police understanding and cooperation;
- such training reinforces the effectiveness and visibility of the European space of freedom, security and justice.

Hence, Common Curricula must be apt to serve as a basis for European courses and modules for police training.

The additional dimension that goes beyond the national borders of policing being one of their most specific characteristics, the Common Curricula will, simultaneously, be designed in such a way that all Member States will find their national training needs accounted for. They can be adapted to individual training and policing systems and philosophies. Cultural, social and legal actualities will be respected. Moreover, the Common Curricula will have a practical orientation and will be updated regularly depending on new developments and conditions.

In order to make sure these criteria are met, all Member States will have the opportunity to participate in all work phases required to make implementation of the Common Curricula possible. Furthermore, it will be highly recommended that the Common Curricula are used to assess and if necessary, adapt national training programmes.

### **3.1.2 *Europe-wide target group***

It is the aim that Member States will implement the agreed CEPOL's Common Curricula in the national police training systems. Provisions shall be made to offer all Member States such an opportunity. Commitment by the Member States is a prerequisite.

Through national implementation the Common Curricula will, in a very efficient way, be able to reach a much larger audience than has been possible through other CEPOL activities. Being translated into the national languages, they will also help overcome language barriers.

The Common Curricula are mainly aiming at contributing to education/training of senior police officers and police officers with

middle ranks and/or middle management functions, as they are CEPOL's primary target group. However it has shown that in some Member States basic and further training of police experts, police teachers and trainers, as well as for police officers in low ranks can also benefit from the Common Curricula.

### **3.1.3 *Implementation within CEPOL's annual Work Programme***

Implementation of the Common Curricula within CEPOL's annual Work Programme will serve to make the Member States familiar with the Curricula. This can be done by means of the "Train the Trainers" method or also by other types of courses, seminars and meetings. During these events, input from the participants related to national issues or training experiences can be used to refine and update the content of the Curricula.

CEPOL's Common Curricula aim at reaching a clearly defined learning objective within a limited period of time. At the same time, all kinds of learning methods can be used in order to provide a large variety of learning experiences and thus address or reach individuals with different interests and learning capacities. However, it is clear that such learning methods are meant to support the learners in meeting the objectives. Implementation of the Common Curricula in CEPOL activities will also help to spread this approach.

## **3.2 Weaknesses, risks and prevention efforts**

The efforts to fulfil this task as assigned may encounter various obstacles and difficulties. Actors involved shall have to do their utmost to prevent risks happening which may impair the development, the quality and the implementation of the Common Curricula. For this, involvement and commitment from all Member States will be a prerequisite.

A first step in the direction of risk prevention is anticipation of potential obstacles and difficulties.

### **3.2.1 *Commitment***

A major risk is a possible lack of commitment by the Member States to accept and implement the Common Curricula in their training systems and to help solve the problem explained in the previous paragraph. This can only be overcome if decision makers on the level of police training in the Member States are aware of the role of this undertaking in the wider scope of their commitment to the European Union in generic terms and to cross-border police cooperation in particular.

### **3.2.2 *Quality of content***

It is essential that experts proposed and selected to work on the Common Curricula have a high level of knowledge and professionalism, and are given time by their hierarchy to work on their tasks.

### **3.2.3 *Awareness of the Common Curricula***

There are so many police training centres in Europe, independent from each other as far as their annual curricula are concerned, mainly in big countries which either have different law enforcement organisations or, if one main organisation, with a number of centres widely spread. A deeper knowledge of police officers and training staff in those organisations and training institutions about CEPOL and its aspirations, tasks and achievements will have a positive influence on the interest in CEPOL's Common Curricula. Enhanced efforts will have to be made by the Member States to intensify this awareness.

## **4. Recommendations**

In order to make sure the objectives and impact the Common Curricula promise to provide are indeed achieved, but also and foremost to avoid or reduce the risks, careful planning of procedures, legal and financial issues as well as an effective cooperation structure within the CEPOL Network is required.

### **4.1 Procedures**

The entire process with regard to the Common Curricula involves different requirements and phases. All Member States will have the opportunity to be involved at all stages of the work procedures. In all procedures the criteria for the European Dimension listed under 3.1.1 will be used as a guideline. CEPOL bodies and experts from the Member States will be appointed to fulfil specified and differentiated tasks).

The following steps will need to be taken:

#### ***1.Appointment of actors***

For the fulfilment of the different tasks involved in the creation and implementation of the Common Curricula different groups will have to be established and experts will have to be selected and appointed. A clear task distribution is required in order to facilitate a good workflow and high-level outcome.

#### ***2.Initiation and decision-making***

The decision to initiate development of a Common Curriculum on which topic, the monitoring of the process and the adoption of the final product

must lie under the authority of the organs of the CEPOL Network. A clear distribution of responsibilities needs to be defined.

### ***3. Development***

Curriculum development is characterised by the following steps: Training needs analysis; definition of target groups; formulation of objectives; selection and organisation of content; selection and organisation of learning experiences and determination of evaluation procedures. Experts from the Member States will be responsible for the development of a Curriculum Descriptor and of a Trainer's Manual/Guide and a Learner's Guide including these steps.

### ***4. Validation***

Member States will be given the opportunity to have their experts assess drafts and translations and to send comments and amendment proposals.

### ***5. Translation***

In order to support national implementation translations will be made of the Common Curricula and the training material into the official EU languages upon request of the Member States.

### ***6. Implementation***

Member States will be asked to distribute the Common Curricula amongst their training institutions for comparison with national curricula programmes and for implementation within the national training systems. During the national implementation process, support will be provided by CEPOL. The Member States shall also organise and support the organisation of Common Curricula Courses within CEPOL's annual Work Programme.

### ***7. Quality Management***

In order to ensure that the curricula satisfy training requirements on the highest level as well as the Member States' training needs on a continuous basis, a process involving feedback, evaluation and updating of the curricula will be put in place.

Evaluation of the impact of the Common Curricula will also be useful in the context of the Evaluation of the Implementation of EU measures in the field of Freedom, Security and Justice<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> Council and Commission Action Plan implementing The Hague Programme, Art 1.1

#### **4.2 Legal Issues and budget**

Ownership, location and dissemination of the final version of the Common Curricula will have to be determined just as well as which costs are to be borne by CEPOL.

#### **5. Conclusion**

The key conclusion to this Policy Paper is that a final product which fulfils national training requirements to a similar extent as the desiderata for police training on the level of European cross-border cooperation depends on carefully planned procedures as well as on an accurate and effective distribution of roles and tasks amongst the different stakeholders within the CEPOL network and its bodies, including the CEPOL Secretariat.

At the same time, both the objectives of The Hague Plan and the measures aiming at their fulfilment and CEPOL's objectives and tasks as stipulated in the Council Decision 2005/681/JHA shall be the banister for all actors involved to hold onto while taken the steps up to completion of this endeavour.