# 2007 discharge: European Police College CEPOL

2008/2271(DEC) - 23/04/2009 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Against the opinion of the committee responsible, the plenary finally decided by 226 in favour, 230 against and 9 abstentions, to reject the proposal to postpone its decision concerning granting the Director of the European Police College discharge and **decided to grant the Director of the College discharge** in respect of the implementation of its budget for the financial year 2007. The decision to grant discharge is also an approval of the closure of the accounts of this EU agency.

Moreover, the Parliament adopted by 403 votes to 37, with 11 abstentions, a resolution with observations which form an integral part of the decision to grant discharge.

Noting that the European Court of Auditors (ECA), in its report on the annual accounts of the College for the financial year 2007, qualified its opinion with regard to the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions on the basis that the system of procurement did not comply with the provisions of the Financial Regulation, the Parliament calls on the College to strictly comply with the Financial Regulation and EC public procurement legislation and to improve its financial management, as it is the second consecutive year in which the ECA raises similar/identical concerns.

The Parliament is also deeply concerned that the Court of Auditors identified cases where appropriations were used to finance the private expenditure of the College's staff. According to the Parliament, this **private use of public funds** is material in nature. Steps should be taken, therefore, to ensure complete reimbursement of these funds. In the light of several amendments adopted in plenary, the Parliament is concerned by a situation where its responsible committee received incomplete information provided on the private use of public money detected by the ECA, by the College's failure to meet the deadline of June 2008 (set in the 2006 discharge resolution) to bring its financial management into line with the Financial Regulation, and by recurrent breaches of basic financial rules.

It also appears that the College violated the principle of unity and accuracy of the budget by not recording EUR 1.5 million received from the Commission in 2007 to implement MEDA properly. The Parliament is also concerned about the weaknesses in the College’s budget management (20% of the appropriations carried over from previous years were cancelled).

As far as the question of misuse of public funds is concerned, the Court of Auditor’s report showed that these expenditures related to the financing of mobile telephone calls, use of pool cars by staff, purchase of furniture for staff accommodation and fee shuttle service of staff to airports and train stations. Although the Parliament notes that measures have been taken to recover all the amounts due, it also points out that it is **not prepared to accept the submission by the College of incomplete information**.

In addition to this, the Parliament is concerned that, although this was already highlighted in the Court of Auditors annual report and the discharge resolution 2006, the College adopted implementing rules for the financial regulation only in February 2008, i. e. more than two years after it became an agency.

Contrary to its committee responsible, the plenary no longer requires the College to present documents and reports on its financial management by 15 June 2009. However, the Parliament calls on the College to fully cooperate with OLAF as part of the **internal investigation concerning the College** to enable OLAF's agents to carry out their duties. The Parliament also asks the College, OLAF and the Commission to inform the discharge authority of the results of the OLAF investigation without delay as soon as they are available.

In addition to these recommendations, the Parliament refers to the recommendations that appear in its resolution on financial management and control of EU agencies - see 2008/2207(INI) - adopted in parallel.