2012 discharge: European Police College (CEPOL)

2013/2229(DEC) - 03/04/2014 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a decision concerning the discharge to be granted to the Director of the European Police College (Cepol) in respect of the implementation of the College's budget for the financial year 2012. The vote on the discharge decision approved the closure of the accounts (in accordance with Annex VI, Article 5(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament.

Noting that the Court of Auditors stated that it has obtained reasonable assurances that the annual accounts of the College for the financial year 2012 are reliable, and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Parliament adopted by 513 votes to 73, with 13 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of recommendations that form an integral part of the discharge decision and as well as the general recommendations that appear in the draft resolution on performance, financial management and control of EU agencies.

These recommendations are summarised as follows:

- **Budget and financial management**: Parliament noted that budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2012 resulted in a budget implementation rate of 95.1% and that the payment appropriations execution rate was 76%.
- **Commitments and carryovers**: it also noted with concern that out of the committed appropriations carried over from 2011 amounting to EUR 1.7 million, EUR 700 000 (41.2%) were cancelled in 2012 mainly due to lower than estimated costs to be reimbursed under the 2011 grant agreements (EUR 440 000 of cancelled carry-overs). It regretted that the carry-over to 2013 of committed appropriations for the 2013 Exchange Programme was irregular.
- **Seat**: Parliament noted with concern that **discussions about the College's future, which have been ongoing for several years, have created a situation of uncertainty** which continues to hamper business planning and implementation. It stressed that the issue of the College’s future seat has to be clarified as soon as possible before the end of 2014, for reasons relating to staff and budget planning which have been highlighted by the Court of Auditors. When selecting a new seat for the College, **economic factors** must be taken in consideration. It recalled that the Commission’s proposal to merge the College with the European Police Office was rejected by a large majority in the Council and that an initiative by 25 Member States proposed to amend the College's founding Council Decision 2005/681/JHA by means of a Regulation to be adopted under the codecision procedure. Parliament stressed the need to **maximise predictability so as to ensure that the move to the new seat is carried out in accordance with sound financial management principles** and took the view that, to this end, the **United Kingdom should bear the College’s removal costs, given that it decided unilaterally not to host the College**.
- **Performance**: Parliament requested that the College communicate the results and impact its work has on European citizens in an accessible way, mainly through its website.

Parliament also made a series of observations on transfers, procurement and recruitment procedures as well as comments on internal controls.

It acknowledged that the College will review its conflicts of interests arrangements currently in place with the aim of developing a specific conflict of interest policy in 2014 on the basis of the Commission's Guidelines on the Prevention and Management of Conflicts of Interests in EU Decentralised Agencies and called on the College to inform the discharge authority on the review results once available.