# 2019 discharge: European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL)

2020/2166(DEC) - 28/04/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided by 635 votes to 56, with 7 abstentions, to **grant discharge** to the Executive Director of the European Union Law Enforcement Training Agency (CEPOL) for the financial year 2019 and to approve the closure of the accounts for that year.

Noting that the Court of Auditors stated that it had obtained reasonable assurance that the Agency's annual accounts for the financial year 2019 were reliable and that the underlying transactions were legal and regular, Parliament adopted, by 621 votes to 59 with 11 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of recommendations which form an integral part of the discharge decision and which complement the general recommendations set out in the resolution on the performance, financial management and control of EU agencies.

***Agency's financial statements***

The Agency's final budget for the financial year 2019 was EUR 18 267 682, an increase of 75.37% compared to 2018.

***Budgetary and financial management***

Parliament welcomed the budget monitoring efforts during the financial year 2019 which resulted in a budget implementation rate of 99.90%, which represents an increase of 1.93% compared to the financial year 2018. The execution rate of payment appropriations was 89.32%, an increase of 12.81% compared to the previous year.

***Other observations***

Members also made a series of observations concerning performance, staff policy, procurement, conflicts of interest and internal controls.

In particular, they noted that:

- the Agency uses some key performance indicators to improve its budgetary management and to measure its training activities and their impact in order to assess the added value they provide. The Agency has delivered on its mandate and in some cases exceeded the objective set in its Work Programme for 2019;

- the Agency plays an important role in providing national law enforcement experts with information on the latest developments in the field of security, law enforcement and information exchange and in facilitating the sharing of best practice;

- in 2019, the Agency conducted 327 training activities involving 34 723 police officers. The CEPOL Cybercrime Academy, established in 2019 and hosted at the Hungarian International Training Centre, provides a fully configured platform to train up to 100 participants simultaneously;

- the Agency continues to closely cooperate with the Justice and Home Affairs agencies' network, and agencies which comprise it

the Agency continues to closely cooperate with the Justice and Home Affairs agencies' network, and agencies which comprise it, including Europol and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency;

- on 31 December 2019,

the establishment plan was 93.75 % executed, with 30 temporary agents appointed out of 32 temporary agents authorised under the Union budget. Gender balance was almost achieved in 2019 at senior management level, but the imbalance persists in the Management Board. The Commission and the co-legislators are invited to continue the dialogue with the Agency on the process of allocating budgetary resources in order to address staff shortages;

- following the Agency's relocation from the UK to Hungary and the resulting lower correction coefficient applied to staff salaries, staff turnover has been high and geographical balance has not always been maintained. The Agency faces difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified staff;

- the Agency has made efforts to create a more inclusive culture and working conditions by taking measures in favour of people with disabilities;

- regarding public procurement, the Agency introduced e-invoicing and e-tendering in 2018 and e-tendering in 2019;

- as regards conflict of interest management, the Agency implemented in 2019 a code of good administrative behaviour and whistleblowing guidelines; declarations of interest and CVs of Management Board members and senior management are published on the website;

- the internal assessment exercise of the internal control systems carried out in 2019 concluded that these systems were implemented effectively and that only minor improvements were needed;

- the Agency successfully completed the ISO 9001:2015 certification of its management system to reinforce and demonstrate its commitment to quality;

- lastly, in 2019 the Agency succeeded in reaching a wider audience by strengthening its presence on social media. The Agency is encouraged to continue to promote its activities in order to increase its visibility to the public.