Police cooperation: establishment of the European Police College CEPOL. Initiative Portugal

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The committee adopted the report by Bernd POSSELT (EPP-ED, D) amending the initiative under the consultation procedure. While broadly agreeing with the priority areas laid down for the work of the European Police College, the committee felt that the College's task should also be to increase the level of knowledge of the police concerning Europol, cross-border police and judicial cooperation in the EU and relevant EU law and programmes. It also wanted to ensure appropriate training in respect for democratic safeguards, in particular the rights of the defence. In addition to the formal aspects of cross-border police cooperation, training should also focus on human rights policy, political and socio-economic trends in the EU, non-repressive law enforcement and best practices as regards crime prevention. The dissemination among the police of the best European standards should be regarded as one of the College's main activities. Regional police forces should also be included in these activities. Priority should also be given to training police officers from countries with which the EU was conducting accession negotiations, as well as from Iceland and Norway. When providing training on assistance for third countries in crisis situations, the report pointed out that the College should also focus on such areas as observance of the rule of law and the maintenance of law and order, bearing in mind the experience of events in neighbouring regions during the past decade. As regards the development of an 'electronic network' to provide back-up for the College in the performance of its duties, the committee was concerned to ensure that security measures were put in place to prevent criminal elements from accessing that network. Lastly, it called for the Decision to be reviewed after two, rather than three, years in order to decide on the College's future institutional structure and seat.