

Fight against fraud: protection of the Community financial interests, Hercule action programme 2004-2006

2003/0152(COD) - 21/04/2004 - Final act

PURPOSE : to establish the "Hercule programme" to promote activities in the field of the protection of the financial interests of the Community. **LEGISLATIVE ACT** : Decision 804/2004/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Community action programme to promote activities in the field of the protection of the Community's financial interests (Hercule programme). **CONTENT** : This Decision establishes the "Hercule" programme, the purpose of which is to help protect the Community's financial interests. It will do this by promoting activities and supporting bodies in accordance with the general criteria set out in the Annex and specified in detail in each annual grants programme. The Programme must take transnational and multidisciplinary aspects into account. It must focus on aligning the substance of activities so as to guarantee effective and equivalent levels of protection on the basis of mutually agreed best practice while also respecting the distinct traditions of each Member State. The Decision sets out the terms for access to the programme and rules on participation. To qualify for a Community grant for an activity aimed at protecting the Community's financial interests, grant beneficiaries must comply with the provisions set out in the Annex. The activity must take account of the specific criteria laid down in the related calls for proposals, in accordance with the priorities set out in the annual grants programme detailing the general criteria set out in the Annex. The amount of a grant for an activity awarded under the programme may not exceed the following rates: - 50 % of eligible expenditure for technical support; - 80 % of eligible expenditure for training measures, promoting exchanges of specialised staff and the holding of seminars and conferences, provided that the beneficiaries are those referred to in the Annex; - 90 % of eligible expenditure for the holding of seminars and conferences, etc., provided that the beneficiaries are those referred to in the Annex. The amount of an operating grant may not exceed 70 % of the eligible expenditure of the body for the calendar year for which the grant is awarded. Where such operating grants are renewed, they are to be gradually decreased. If a grant is awarded to a body which received an operating grant the preceding year, the percentage of Community co-financing represented by the new grant must be at least 10 percentage points lower than the Community co-financing percentage represented by the grant in the preceding year. The programme starts on 1 January 2004 and end on 31 December 2006. The financial framework for the implementation of the programme for the period 2004 to 2006 is EUR 11775000. **ENTRY INTO FORCE** : 01/05/04.