

Pericles 2020 programme: exchange, assistance and training for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting (2014-2020)

2011/0449(COD) - 11/12/2013 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 528 votes to 4, with 9 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an exchange, assistance and training programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting (the 'Pericles 2020' programme).

Parliament adopted its position at first reading following the ordinary legislative procedure. The amendments adopted in plenary are the result of a compromise reached between the European Parliament and the Council. They amend the Commission proposal as follows:

Subject matter: Members stipulated that the multiannual action programme should seek to promote actions for the protection and **safeguarding of the euro** against counterfeiting and related fraud.

Added value: the Programme should actively encourage and entail an increase in transnational cooperation for the protection of the euro inside and outside the Union and with the Union's trading partners, and with attention also being paid to those Member States or **third countries** that have the highest rates of euro counterfeiting, as shown by the relevant reports issued by the competent authorities; this cooperation shall contribute to the greater effectiveness of these operations through the sharing of best practice, common standards and joint specialised training.

Financial envelope: Parliament proposed that the financial envelope for the implementation of the Programme for the period from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020 should be set at **EUR 7 344 000** (in current prices).

The Commission shall not depart from said indicative allocation of funds by more than 10 %. Should it prove necessary to exceed that limit, the Commission shall be empowered to adopt delegated acts to modify the indicative allocation of funds laid down in the Annex.

The annual appropriations shall be authorised by the European Parliament and the Council within the limits of the **multiannual financial framework**.

Financial support should take the form of: (a) grants; (b) public procurement. The co-financing rate for grants should not exceed **75 %** of the eligible costs with a level of 90% in exceptional circumstances.

Eligible actions include: (i) exchange and dissemination of information; (ii) technical, scientific and operational assistance; (iii) grants to finance the purchase of equipment to be used by specialised anti-counterfeiting authorities. A minimum of 90 % of the budget shall be allocated to these actions.

Europol, Eurojust and Interpol, **private entities** and other bodies offering specific expertise, including, where appropriate, such bodies from third countries and in particular from accession candidate countries may organise **joint actions**.

Annual work programmes: in order to implement the Programme, the Commission should adopt annual work programmes. They should set out the following:

- the actions to be undertaken in accordance with the general and specific objectives, including the indicative allocation of financial resources and the method of implementation;
- the essential selection criteria for grants and the maximum possible rate of cofinancing.

Resources allocated to communication actions under the Programme shall also contribute to cover the **corporate communication of the Union's political priorities**, as far as they are related to the general objectives of the Programme.

Protection of the financial interests of the Union: the Commission may also take appropriate measures (administrative and financial penalties) ensuring that, when actions financed under this Regulation are implemented, the financial interests of the Union are protected. The European Anti-fraud Office (OLAF) may carry out **investigations**, including on-the-spot checks and inspections, with a view to establishing whether there has been fraud, corruption or any other illegal activity affecting the financial interests of the Union.

Evaluations: by 31 December 2017, an **independent mid-term evaluation report** should be presented by the Commission on the achievement of the objectives of all the measures, the efficient and cost effective use of resources and its added value to the Union. It should be prepared with a view to **informing a decision on the renewal, modification or suspension of the measures**. A **final evaluation** report should be presented by 31 December 2021.

For reasons of urgency, this Regulation should **enter into force as soon as possible** after its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union.