

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

2011/0449(COD) - 29/06/2017 - Follow-up document

The Commission presented a report on the implementation and the results of the Pericles 2020 programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting in 2016.

The programme, established by Regulation (EU) No 331/2014 for a period up to 31 December 2020, shall be implemented through co-financed actions originating from the competent authorities of the Member States and actions organised directly by the Commission (seminars/conferences, training, staff exchanges, studies, purchase of equipment etc).

The programme shows a high degree of consistency and complementarity with OLAF's '[Hercule III programme](#)', which protects the Union's financial interests, as well as the [Internal Security Fund](#) - Police which covers the prevention and combating of crime in general.

Implementation of the programme and the results of the actions undertaken in 2016: the report showed that the programme continues to be an **important and effective tool** in the fight against counterfeiting, as illustrated by the fact that the budget available for 2016 (EUR 1 038 500) has been fully committed:

- in 2016, the programme funded 13 projects in total. The actions took place **both inside and outside the EU** depending on the specific needs to protect the euro against counterfeiting in particular in sensitive regions of the world, including Latin America and South-Eastern Europe (e. g. Italy and Bulgaria);
- participants come from **60 countries**. Most of them (63%) are European: 39% come from euro area Member States, 14% from non-Euro area countries and 10% from non-EU Member States;
- the **diversification of participants** has increased. Members from **police forces** represent 37% of the total number of participants. The participation rate of central banks rose sharply (23%). The rate of participation of members of the judiciary remains high (11%) and that of the mints is increasing (8%).

Overview of actions committed to in 2016: the programme has succeeded to **maintain and further strengthen strong regional international cooperation** and exchange best practices among all actors involved in the fight against euro counterfeiting:

- several actions committed in 2016 addressed the threat posed by the **internet/darknet** in the fight against counterfeiting, focussing on the effectiveness of investigation techniques and the need for a coordinated response to the threat;
- the programme co-financed the second phase of the study organised by the Monnaie de Paris in order to examine the possibility of developing **new interactive materials** that will enhance the security features of future euro coins;

- a number of actions have dealt with issues relating to the **classification and/or authentication** of euro coins and banknotes.

In addition, the following cases illustrate the programme's contribution to the protection of the euro against counterfeiting in 2016:

- in May 2016, **Kosovo** adopted a new regulation covering all aspects of euro-cash transactions following the participation of its representatives in several Pericles 2020 actions;
- law enforcement personnel trained under the programme participated in the dismantling of three clandestine print shops in Colombia and the arrest of 49 persons suspected of counterfeiting the euro in **Peru**.

Outlook: the results of the implementation of the programme and the analysis of emerging threats addressed by the Euro-counterfeiting expert group (ECEG) identified the following priorities for 2017:

- support activities aimed at improving cooperation between Member States which are particularly affected by the production or distribution of counterfeits;
- fostering cooperation with third-country authorities where there is suspicion of or evidence for counterfeit euro production;
- maintain an effective framework for the protection of the euro in South-Eastern Europe.
- address new themes such as technical developments within the coin processing machines, the distribution of counterfeits and high-quality components on the Internet, and the growing interest in euro counterfeiting of criminals living in a third country.