

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

2011/0449(COD) - 13/08/2018 - Follow-up document

In accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EU) No 331/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council, the Commission presents a report concerning the implementation and the results of the Pericles 2020 programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting in 2017.

The Commission considers that the 'Pericles 2020' programme continues to be **an important and efficient tool in the fight against counterfeiting**. The programme forms the basis for the support of studies, maintaining and developing cooperation, and exchanging best practices among all actors involved in the fight against euro counterfeiting.

Annual Work Programme 2017: the annual budget for the implementation of the Programme for the year 2017 was set at **EUR 1 047 500**. Discussions of the multi-annual strategy at the meetings of the Euro Counterfeiting Experts Group (ECEG) made it possible to **commit 99.99% of the overall budget in 2017**, and the Programme funded 13 projects in total. The report notes the following:

- **applicants to the programme** in 2017 represent six Member States, namely Italy, Spain, Romania, Croatia, Portugal and Austria. To an extent, this reflects the fact that the countries most affected by euro counterfeiting are more frequent users of Pericles funds;
- the **actions** for which commitments were made in 2017 (consisting of 6 seminars/conferences, 2 technical trainings, 4 staff exchanges, and 1 purchase of equipment) take place both inside and outside the EU depending on the specific needs to protect the euro against counterfeiting;
- the implementation of the programme in 2017 demonstrates a continuing positive trend towards an increasing **differentiation and diversification** of the professional backgrounds of participants over the years. Members from police forces represent 42% of the total, the substantial participation of central banks has remained nearly constant with (24%) and there is a continuing high participation of members of the judiciary (8%). Of particular note is the significant participation of mints (4%), customs (4%), ministries of finance (3%) and financial institutions (3%);
- 2017 saw the implementation of **10 actions that were committed to under previous budgets** of the programme. Of particular note is the **EU China platform meeting** on the protection of currencies against counterfeiting that was held in November 2017 in Brussels, Belgium. The action was successful in establishing a platform of cooperation with Chinese authorities, and treated topics such as the exchange of best practices on the dismantling of illegal printshops and mints, the distribution of counterfeits on the internet/darknet, and the channels for the exchange of operational information.

The report states that the programme shows a **high degree of consistency and complementarity** with other relevant programmes and actions at Union level and echoes the positive overall assessment regarding its EU added value, coherence, relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and efficiency in the mid-term evaluation (see previous summary).

Based on the results of the implementation of the programme and the continuous analysis of emerging threats discussed in the ECEG, the priorities for 2018 are the following:

- supporting activities aimed at improving cooperation among those Member States which are **particularly affected** by the production and distribution of counterfeits;
- fostering cooperation with authorities of those **third countries** where there is suspicion of or evidence for counterfeit euro production;
- maintaining an efficient framework for the protection of the euro in **South Eastern Europe**;
- **topical developments**: technical developments within the coin processing machines industry, the distribution of counterfeits and high quality components on the internet and improving security features of euro coins.