

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

2011/0449(COD) - 02/07/2019 - 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 2018.

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 2018*

The annual budget for the implementation of the Programme for the year 2018 was set at EUR 1 055 100. A total of EUR 993 388.74 was committed in 2018. Discussions of the multi-annual strategy at the meetings of the Euro Counterfeiting Experts Group (ECEG) made it possible to commit 94.15% of the overall budget in 2018 and the Programme funded 11 projects in total. The report notes the following:

- applicants to the Programme in 2018 represent two Member States, namely Italy and Spain. This reflects the fact that the countries most affected by euro counterfeiting are more frequent users of Pericles funds. Their efforts enhance the protection of the euro which is beneficial to all other Member States participating in the euro area;

- the actions for which commitments were made in 2018 consist of 3 seminars/conferences, 2 technical trainings, 4 staff exchanges, and 2 purchases of equipment. Of note is the relatively high number of staff exchanges, which is a cost-effective measure targeting a relatively large audience, thereby facilitating the exchange of know-how and increasing the creation of homogeneous framework for protecting the euro against counterfeiting;

- 2018 saw the implementation of 10 actions that were committed to under previous budgets of the Programme. Of those actions, 8 originated from the competent national authorities of Member States - namely France, Spain, Portugal, Romania, Austria, Croatia and Italy - while 2 actions were initiated by the Commission;

- 2018 also saw the implementation of several Pericles 2020 actions which focussed on encouraging and maintaining strong cooperation among the competent national authorities in South Eastern Europe. This included staff exchanges organised respectively by the Romanian and Italian police authorities, the former establishing and maintaining cooperation with countries in the Eastern Balkan and Black Sea region, including Turkey, Moldova and Ukraine;

- several actions implemented in 2018 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 report noted that the Programme shows a high degree of consistency and complementarity with other relevant programmes and actions at Union level because it is dedicated exclusively to and focuses on preventing and fighting a specific form of organised crime, namely euro counterfeiting.

Taking into account the recommendation to renew the programme beyond 2020 and its proven effectiveness underlined in the Mid-Term evaluation of the "Pericles 2020" programme, as well as the positive support from its stakeholders such as the Member States, the ECB and Europol, the Commission has adopted as part of the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework a [proposal](#) to continue the programme beyond 2020 as the Pericles IV programme.

Based on the results of the implementation of the Programme and the continuous analysis of emerging threats discussed in the ECEG, the priorities for 2019 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: security features of euro coins, the implementation of Regulation (EU) No 1210 /2010 concerning authentication of euro coins and handling of euro coins unfit for circulation, distribution of counterfeits and high quality components on the internet, support for the establishment/reinforcement of National Central Offices.