

# Protection of the euro against counterfeiting, Pericles programme 2002-2013: extension to the non-participating Member States

2006/0079(CNS) - 23/05/2006 - Legislative proposal

**PURPOSE** : to extend to the non-participating Member States the application of the proposed Decision amending and extending Decision 2001/923/EC establishing the PERICLES programme.

**PROPOSED ACT** : Council Decision.

**CONTENT** : PERICLES, the Community programme for exchange, assistance and training in the protection of the euro against counterfeiting, was established by Council Decision 2001/923/EC, ('the Pericles Decision'), as amended and extended by the Council Decision 2006/75/EC. Article 13(3)(b) requires a detailed report on the implementation and results of the PERICLES Programme referred to above to be submitted to the European Parliament and the Council by 30 June 2006. The Commission presents a report responding to that requirement, and a proposal to amend the Decision.

Since early Summer 2003, the number of counterfeit euro banknotes detected in circulation has stabilised at about 50 000 a month, a level below the pre-euro levels, lower than the US dollar and extremely low compared to the nine billion genuine euro banknotes in circulation. At the same time, the number of counterfeit euro coins is continuing to increase but also remains low by historical standards. In addition, the police forces have successfully conducted a number of operations to dismantle workshops and seize large numbers of counterfeit banknotes and coins before they enter into circulation. This overall favourable situation is the result of a long preparation at both legislative and institutional level and demonstrates the high level of cooperation achieved in EU and at international level. The PERICLES programme is playing a significant role in achieving the present results in the protection of the euro and the fight against the crime of counterfeiting, through the exchange of information and the development of cooperation. Continuing vigilance is needed in order to maintain and build on the results currently achieved in the fight euro counterfeiting. Training and technical assistance plays an important role in this respect, hence the need to continue the PERICLES programme.

This proposal is closely linked to the concurrent proposal that Council Decision 2001/923/EC now be extended until 31 December 2013. (Please see procedure reference **CNS/2006/0078**). The new end-date is 31 December 2013, and the reference amount is set at EUR 7 million. The date of application will be 1 January 2007. This proposal provides that the application of that proposed Decision shall be extended to Member States other than the participating Member States as defined in the first indent of Article 1 of Council Regulation 974/1998/EC.

**For further information concerning the financial implications of this measure, please refer to the financial statement.**