

Procedure file

Basic information	
<p>COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Regulation</p> <p>2011/0449(COD)</p> <p>Procedure completed</p>	
<p>Pericles 2020 programme: exchange, assistance and training for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting (2014-2020)</p> <p>Repealing Decision 2001/923/EC 2001/0105(CNS) Repealing Decision 2001/924/EC 2001/0106(CNS) Repealing Decision 2006/75/EC 2005/0029(CNS) Repealing Decision 2006/76/EC 2005/0030(CNS) Repealing Decision 2006/849/EC 2006/0078(CNS) Repealing Decision 2006/850/EC 2006/0079(CNS) See also 2011/0446(APP)</p> <p>Subject 5.20.02 Single currency, euro, euro area 7.30.30.10 Action against counterfeiting</p>	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs		27/02/2012
		ECR MCINTYRE Anthea	
		Shadow rapporteur PPE DÍAZ DE MERA GARCÍA CONSUEGRA Agustín S&D PAPADOPOULOU Antigoni ALDE ALFANO Sonia Verts/ALE TAVARES Rui	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	BUDG Budgets		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN	3302	11/03/2014
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)	ŠEMETA Algirdas	

Key events			
19/12/2011	Legislative proposal published	COM(2011)0913	Summary
19/01/2012	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
27/11/2013	Vote in committee, 1st reading		
02/12/2013	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A7-0423/2013	Summary
	Results of vote in Parliament		

11/12/2013			
11/12/2013	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T7-0552/2013	Summary
11/03/2014	Act adopted by Council after Parliament's 1st reading		
11/03/2014	Final act signed		
11/03/2014	End of procedure in Parliament		
05/04/2014	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2011/0449(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Regulation
	Repealing Decision 2001/923/EC 2001/0105(CNS) Repealing Decision 2001/924/EC 2001/0106(CNS) Repealing Decision 2006/75/EC 2005/0029(CNS) Repealing Decision 2006/76/EC 2005/0030(CNS) Repealing Decision 2006/849/EC 2006/0078(CNS) Repealing Decision 2006/850/EC 2006/0079(CNS) See also 2011/0446(APP)
Legal basis	Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 133
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	LIBE/7/08298

Documentation gateway

Legislative proposal	COM(2011)0913	19/12/2011	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2011)1614	19/12/2011	EC	
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2011)1615	19/12/2011	EC	
European Central Bank: opinion, guideline, report	CON/2012/0017 OJ C 137 12.05.2012, p. 0007	02/03/2012	ECB	Summary
Committee draft report	PE491.149	20/06/2012	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee	PE494.709	06/09/2012	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A7-0423/2013	02/12/2013	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading	T7-0552/2013	11/12/2013	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2014)148	13/02/2014	EC	
Draft final act	00028/2013/LEX	11/03/2014	CSL	
Follow-up document	COM(2015)0507	19/10/2015	EC	Summary

Follow-up document		COM(2016)0419	27/06/2016	EC	Summary
Follow-up document		COM(2017)0345	29/06/2017	EC	Summary
Follow-up document		COM(2017)0741	06/12/2017	EC	Summary
Follow-up document		SWD(2017)0443	06/12/2017	EC	
Follow-up document		SWD(2017)0444	06/12/2017	EC	
Follow-up document		COM(2018)0581	13/08/2018	EC	Summary
Follow-up document		COM(2019)0287	02/07/2019	EC	Summary
Follow-up document		COM(2021)0476	12/08/2021	EC	
Follow-up document		SWD(2022)0207	28/07/2022	EC	
Follow-up document		SWD(2022)0208	28/07/2022	EC	

Additional information

National parliaments	IPEX
European Commission	EUR-Lex

Final act

[Regulation 2014/331](#)

[OJ L 103 05.04.2014, p. 0001](#) Summary

Final legislative act with provisions for delegated acts

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

PURPOSE: to establish, from 2014 to 2020, an exchange, assistance and training programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting (the 'Pericles 2020' programme).

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

BACKGROUND: the euro continues to be an attractive target for organised crime groups active in counterfeiting money, not only in Europe but also in other regions of the world. The international dimension of the threat with respect to euro counterfeiting calls for supranational coordination in facing it; through the Pericles programme, the Commission conducts such coordination by way of exchanges, training activities and technical assistance. Activities with the aim of promoting exchanges of information and staff, technical and scientific assistance and specialised training help significantly to protect Europe's single currency against counterfeiting and related fraud and therefore to attain a high and equivalent level of protection across the Union.

Past support for such initiatives, through Council Decision 2001/923/EC establishing an exchange, assistance and training programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting (the "Pericles" programme), has made it possible to enhance the activities of the Union and the Member States in the field of the protection of the euro against counterfeiting. The objectives of the Pericles programme for both the period 2002-2006 and the period 2007-2013 were successfully achieved.

The Treaty reflects concerns about the protection of the euro by providing for the measures necessary for its use as a single currency. As the legal basis for Pericles will expire at the end of 2013, its replacement should ensure the continuity of Union support for the activities carried out by the Commission and the Member States.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT: four options have been considered:

- Option 1: continue the programme with the same level of funding (baseline scenario).
- Option 2: renew the Pericles programme with improved objectives and methodology, including in particular an increased maximum rate of co-financing.
- Option 3: merge Pericles with other Commission programmes.
- Option 4: discontinue the Pericles programme, and leave it for Member States to organise activities at national level for protecting the euro.

The option to renew the programme with improved objectives and methodology is preferred (Option 2). This option has a budgetary allocation in real prices that remains similar to the current allocation (approximately one million euro per year). It adds flexibility in determining the amount of the grant by simplifying the determination of costs to be borne by Member States; it broadens the range of eligible activities by making it possible to finance the purchase of equipment to be used by specialised anti-counterfeiting agencies in for protecting the euro

against counterfeiting; and it increases the rate of co-financing up to a maximum of 90 % of eligible costs, in duly justified cases. The higher rate of co-financing will particularly facilitate a more balanced geographic distribution of activities by offering wider scope for Member States to apply.

LEGAL BASIS: Article 133 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). The application of the Pericles programme will be extended to the Member States that have not adopted the euro as their single currency, through a proposal for a parallel Regulation based on Article 352 TFEU.

CONTENT: the Commission proposes to establish a multiannual action programme Pericles 2020 to promote activities for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting and related fraud. The Programme shall run from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020. The Programme shall contribute to increased transnational cooperation for the protection of the euro at Union level and internationally and to the greater effectiveness of these operations on the basis of best practices, common standards and joint specialised training. The general objective of the Programme shall be to prevent and combat counterfeiting and fraud thus enhancing the competitiveness of the European economy and securing the sustainability of public finances.

The specific objective of the Programme shall be to protect the euro banknotes and coins against counterfeiting and related fraud, by supporting and supplement the measures undertaken by the Member States and assisting the competent national and European authorities in their efforts to develop between themselves and with the European Commission a close and regular cooperation, also including third countries and international organisations.

This objective shall be measured, inter alia, through the effectiveness of action by financial, technical, law-enforcement and judicial authorities, as measured through the number of counterfeits detected, illegal workshops dismantled, individuals arrested and sanctions imposed.

The Pericles programme concerns this specific sphere of activity of the European Commission and its cooperation with Member States competent authorities, as well as with the other European institutions and bodies, more particularly through OLAF. Support from programmes designed to have a wider impact would be less effective in addressing such a specific issue and, in political terms, the EU institutions should demonstrate that they share a real determination to deal with this important aspect of EU policy and European identity. Accordingly, the Pericles programme will:

- target exclusively the protection of the euro, in the context of a long-term vision that is consistent with other EU objectives, on the basis of the priorities set each year for this specific field of expertise;
- allow the implementation of other EU programmes to focus on priorities other than the protection of the euro;
- fully take into account the results of the activities already co-financed in the past in this field, including in terms of targeted rules for beneficiaries and geographical balance;
- aim not only to have a direct impact on the situation of some Member States but to place strong emphasis on the EU dimension of the protection of Europe's single currency.

The Pericles 2020 programme will make a substantial contribution to maintaining and further improving the high level of protection of the euro associated with the intensification of cross-border cooperation, exchanges and assistance. At the same time, overall savings will be achieved from the collectively organised activities and procurement, as compared to potential individual national initiatives. Priorities and implementation strategies are regularly discussed at meetings of the Euro Counterfeiting Experts Group (ECEG). The ECEG coordinates and is associated with the implementation of Pericles activities.

In addition, the objectives have been renewed with special attention to setting Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART) criteria. This will also help to ensure proper implementation and monitoring.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS: the overall budget is EUR 7 700 000 in current prices. This amount is in line with the Commission proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework for the period 2014-2020: [A Budget for Europe 2020](#).

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

OPINION OF THE EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK on a 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).

The ECB reiterates its view that the Pericles programme is a useful contribution to the activities already deployed by the ECB, Europol and national authorities in the fight against euro counterfeiting. The ECB is confident that the Pericles 2020 programme will continue to contribute to preserving the integrity of euro banknotes, including the second series of euro banknotes.

The ECB makes the following observations :

Evaluation of the specific objective of the Pericles 2020 programme: the ECB considers that the programme should be evaluated against all the aspects that influence euro counterfeiting and fraud. Therefore, the ECB recommends full involvement of the ECB and Europol in evaluating the Pericles 2020 programme as provided in the proposed regulation.

Third countries: while acknowledging the benefits for euro counterfeit and fraud deterrence worldwide by including third countries in the Pericles 2020 programme, third country involvement should be sensible and proportionate.

Grants for the purchase of equipment: the ECB agrees with the proposal to make grants for the acquisition of general laboratory equipment, such as microscopes, infrared readers, callipers, densitometers, micrometers, readers of conductivity and magnetism that aid the investigative process and are not specifically designed or marketed as counterfeit detecting equipment. The ECB considers that the only reliable counterfeit detection machines and devices are those listed on its website as having performed satisfactorily in tests involving a batch of topical counterfeit types and genuine banknotes with a range of wear and tear characteristics. Such machines and devices are, however, aimed at the professional cash handling industry and are in general beyond the scope of the specialised anti-counterfeiting authorities defined as the target group in the proposed regulation. Therefore, the ECB is of the opinion that it is not appropriate to consider financing the purchase of counterfeit detectors with funds of the Pericles 2020 programme or using counterfeit detectors by specialised anti-counterfeiting authorities.

Examination of initiatives to be funded: it would be beneficial for the Commission, the ECB and Europol to jointly examine initiatives to be

funded under the Pericles 2020 programme, thus avoiding duplication and overlap between the Pericles 2020 programme and other relevant programmes and activities and ensuring the development of a common strategy against euro counterfeiting and fraud. Accordingly, the proposed regulation should be amended to provide for: (a) timely consultation of the principal parties involved by the Commission in relation to the annual work programme; and (b) obtaining the ECBs and Europol's agreement on the annual work programme for the purpose of its adoption. In this regard, the ECB and Europol should be given sufficient time to examine the draft annual work programme and to submit their views prior to its discussion within the appropriate advisory committee.

Implementation of the programme: the ECB welcomes the fact that the Commission is to implement the Pericles 2020 programme in cooperation with the Member States, through consultations at different implementation stages, taking into account relevant measures undertaken by other competent entities, in particular the ECB and Europol. While the proposed regulation ensures a sufficient level of cooperation at Union level as well as consistency between the Pericles 2020 programme and other relevant programmes and activities, the ECB recommends that the Commission allow for sufficient time for familiarisation with the documentation in relation to the annual work programme before consulting the ECB and Europol on it within the appropriate advisory committee.

Evaluation of the programme: the ECB recommends amending the proposal to allow for the involvement of the ECB and Europol in the evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of the Pericles 2020 programme and of its possible renewal, modification or suspension.

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

The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs adopted the report by Anthea McINTYRE (ECR, UK) 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).

The committee recommended that Parliament adopt its position in first reading, following the ordinary legislative procedure, and 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 amended text stipulated that the Programme shall 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: Members 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.

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.

Evaluations: Members proposed that an evaluation of the Programme should be carried out by the Commission. 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.

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

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.

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

PURPOSE: to establish, from 2014 to 2020, an exchange, assistance and training programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting (the Pericles 2020 programme).

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Regulation (EU) No 331/2014 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) and repealing Council Decisions 2001/923/EC, 2001/924/EC, 2006/75/EC, 2006/76/EC, 2006/849/EC and 2006/850/EC.

CONTENT: the programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting (the Pericles 2020 programme) relies on two previous Pericles programmes for the periods 2002-2006 and 2007-2013 which successfully achieved their objectives.

The general objective of the Programme shall be to prevent and combat counterfeiting and related fraud, thus enhancing the competitiveness of the Unions economy and securing the sustainability of public finances

Budget: in line with the wishes of the European Parliament, a financial envelope of EUR 7 344 000 (in current prices) is foreseen for the period from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020.

Eligible actions: the Programme shall take into account the transnational and multidisciplinary aspects of the fight against counterfeiting and shall promote best practice adapted to the national specificities of each Member State. The Programme shall provide financial support for the following actions:

- the exchange and dissemination of information, in particular through organising workshops, meetings and seminars, including training, targeted placements and exchanges of staff of competent national authorities;

- the technical, scientific and operational assistance, as appears necessary, as part of the Programme;
- grants to finance the purchase of equipment to be used by specialised anti-counterfeiting authorities in the fight against counterfeiting.

Participation: the Programme foresees the participation of police forces and financial administrations, as well as representatives of the national central banks and the mints, judicial officers and any other group of specialists concerned, such as chambers of commerce and industry.

Actions under the Programme may be organised jointly by the Commission and other partners having relevant expertise, such as: the national central banks and the European Central Bank (ECB), Europol, Eurojust and Interpol, as well as private entities that have developed and provided evidence of technical knowledge and teams specialising in detecting counterfeit banknotes and coins.

Protection of the financial interests of the Union: the Commission may take administrative and financial penalties within the implementation of actions financed by this Regulation. The European Anti-fraud Office (OLAF) may carry out investigations, including on-the-spot checks and inspections, to establish the existence of fraud.

Monitoring and evaluation: the Programme shall be implemented by the Commission in cooperation with the Member States, through regular consultations at different stages of the implementation of the Programme. The Commission shall present an independent mid-term evaluation report by 31 December 2017, as well as a final evaluation report by 31 December 2017.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 06/04/2014. The Regulation shall apply from 01/01/2014.

DELEGATED ACTS: the Commission may adopt delegated acts in order to provide for a degree of flexibility in the allocation of funds. The power to adopt delegated acts is conferred on the Commission from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020. The European Parliament or the Council may raise objections in regard to a delegated act within two months of notification of that act (this period may be extended by two months). If the European Parliament or the Council make objections, the delegated act will not enter into force.

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

The Commission presents a report concerning the implementation and the results of the Pericles programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting in 2014.

Implementation of the programme and results: the annual budget for the implementation of the programme for the year 2014 was set at EUR 924 200. A total of EUR 878 517 was committed in 2014. The Commission considers that the implementation of the Programme reflected the commitment of Member States to protect the euro against counterfeiting.

In the year 2014, the Programme funded 10 projects; of these projects, 6 originated from the competent authorities of euro area Member States. The [Regulation](#), which should extend the application of the "Pericles 2020" programme to non-euro area Member States, is in the process of adoption by the EU legislator. Therefore, in 2014, the programme was only applicable to euro area Member States.

Action and participants: the actions for which commitments were made in 2014 consisted of three seminars, three technical trainings, two staff exchanges and two studies. Specific focus areas in 2014 were Latin America (Chile and Colombia), the South East of Europe (Albania and Turkey) and the Mediterranean region.

In terms of origin, participants come from 57 countries. The majority of trainees (56%) are European participants: 33% come from the European Union Member States, while non-EU countries in Europe represents the second largest group at 23%; 18% of trainees are from Latin America (mainly Colombia and Chile), and 12% come from the Middle East and North Africa.

With respect to the professional background of participants, members from police forces represent 44% of the total. There was increased participation from Central Banks (18%), commercial banks (7%), judicial staff (6%) and Mints (6%).

Overview of actions committed to in 2014: the Programme shows a high degree of consistency and complementarity with other relevant programmes and actions at Union level, such as OLAF's [Hercules III programme](#) (which protects the Unions financial interests) and DG HOME's [Internal Security Fund](#) Police (which covers the prevention and combating of crime in general). The report goes on to note:

- the growing participation of the judiciary in several actions;
- maintaining the Programmes strong regional cooperation in 2014, with several actions taking place in Latin America, the Mediterranean area and the Balkans region;
- the addition of two studies, one on euro counterfeiting and its perpetrators, and the other on enhanced security features for use in euro coins.

A particular highlight of the 2014 "Pericles 2020" programme is the 3rd International Conference on the Protection of the Euro against Counterfeiting, held in Frankfurt from 24 to 27 March 2015, and jointly organised with Europol and the European Central Bank. It brought together more than 170 experts from over 40 nationalities in workshops and presentations. The conference was highly successful in exchanging best practices and laying the basis for increased multidisciplinary cooperation between and among the European Institutions, Member States and third countries.

Conclusion and priorities for 2015: the report concludes that the "Pericles 2020" programme continues to be an important and effective tool in the fight against counterfeiting. It 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. Based on the results of the implementation of the Programme and the continuous analysis of emerging threats discussed in the Euro Counterfeiting Expert Group, the priorities for 2015 are the following:

- increasing emphasis on Member States which are particularly affected by the production and distribution of counterfeits;
- maintaining an efficient framework for the protection of the euro in South Eastern Europe and the candidate country Turkey;
- developing closer cooperation with authorities of those third countries for which there is suspicion or evidence of the presence of counterfeit euro production
- reinforcing the protection of euro coins by developing new security features or authentication methods.

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

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 2015.

The main conclusion of the report is that the "Pericles 2020" programme continues to be an important and effective tool in the fight against counterfeiting.

Implementation of the programme and results of committed actions: the annual budget for the implementation of the programme for the year 2015 was set at EUR 1 024 800. A total of EUR 967 739.33 was committed in 2015. Discussions of the multi-annual strategy at the meetings of the Euro Counterfeiting Experts Group (ECEG) made it possible to commit 94.4% of the overall budget in 2015.

The Commission's assessment is that, in comparison to the previous year, more projects were co-financed under the programme. In 2015, the programme funded 12 projects in total. 2 actions were implemented in 2015, while 10 actions will be implemented in 2016.

- Applicants to the programme represented five Member States, namely Italy, France, Spain, Germany and Croatia, which reflects the fact that the countries most affected by euro counterfeiting are more frequent users of Pericles funds.
- Specific focus areas in 2015 were Latin America (two actions organised by Spain), South-East Europe (actions organised by Croatia, Italy and the Commission), the Mediterranean region (an action organised by Italy) and China (actions organised by France, Italy and the Commission).
- Participants come from 59 countries. The majority (65%) are European participants. Of special note is the increase in participants from Asia, representing 4% with all participants coming from China.
- With respect to the professional background of participants, members from police forces represent 53% of the total. A continuing trend of differentiation among the various other categories of participants (47%) should be highlighted. There was high participation from Central Banks (19%), and a growing participation of judicial staff (10%) [5](#) and customs (4%).

Overview of actions in 2015: 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:

- the programme has succeeded in maintaining and further strengthening strong regional and international cooperation, with several actions taking place in Latin America, the Mediterranean area and the Balkans region, as well as three actions that involve representatives from China;
- in January 2016, the Pericles-funded 'Sino European Cooperation in Combatting Counterfeiting of the Euro' conference was held in Paris. The 'Pericles EU-China Workshop on the protection of currencies' will be held in Brussels with participation of the Chinese Ministry of Public Security;
- the Commission continues the sequence of Euro South East Conferences with the 12th Euro South East conference that will be held in October 2016 in Zagreb, Croatia;
- lastly, the programme shows a high degree of complementarity and consistency with other relevant EU programmes, such as OLAF's [Hercule III](#) programme, which protects the financial interests of the Union.

Priorities for 2016: based on the results of the implementation of the programme and the continuous analysis of emerging threats discussed in the ECEG, the priorities for 2016 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-East Europe;
- introducing new developments: security features or authentication methods, the distribution of counterfeits and raw materials on the internet and the involvement of Member States' customs authorities in the fight against currency counterfeiting.

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

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 programmes 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.

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

The Commission presented a report on the mid-term evaluation of the Pericles 2020 programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting.

According to Regulation (EU) No 331/2014, an independent mid-term evaluation of the Programme shall be presented by the Commission to the European Parliament and to the Council by 31 December 2017.

The evaluation covered the different type of actions committed or implemented under the Programme in 2014, 2015 and 1st semester of 2016. It addressed, inter alia:

- the achievements of the objectives of all actions,
- the relevance,
- effectiveness,
- efficiency,
- sustainability,
- added value and coherence taking into consideration all elements necessary to support a decision to either renew, modify or suspend the measures/types of actions financed under the Programme.

According to the evaluation all the findings converge towards an unambiguously positive overall assessment. In particular, it shows that the Programme has performed very well in respect of all the above mentioned evaluation criteria while taking into account some room for improvement.

Continuation of the current Programme: the Commission is of the opinion that the Programme should continue until its natural expiry in 2020 given that all available evidence suggests that:

- the general and specific objectives are relevant and will remain so during the Programmes life;
- the actions of the Programme were typically implemented, planned and achieved the intended outputs;
- a discontinuation of the Programme would have serious detrimental effects.

Continuation of the Programme post 2020: the Commission further supports the continuation of the Programme beyond 2020 given its EU added value, its long-term impact and sustainability. It considered that euro protection goes beyond the interest and the responsibility of individual EU Member States and must by definition be ensured at EU-level. The Programmes EU added value lies in its focus in supporting transnational and multidisciplinary cooperation between a restricted group of highly specialised competent national authorities, such as national central banks, police, judicial authorities and technical laboratories that would otherwise be beyond reach of those national authorities. The discontinuation would have an adverse impact on strengthening the institutional capacity in national authorities, which constitutes the Programme's 'core business'.

Continuation of the Programme post 2020 as a standalone programme: the Commission concurs with the assessment of the evaluation on the continuation of the Programme as a standalone programme beyond 2020.

An elimination of Pericles 2020 as a standalone programme or its possible merging with other EU programmes to achieve economies of scale would entail a loss in specificity, and more importantly, a considerable erosion of expertise of the highly effective framework protecting the

euro. Potential financial savings would be made to the detriment of the current level of euro protection and the ability of the Commission and stakeholders to swiftly react to emerging threats.

Way forward: only a limited number of competent national authorities apply for funding under the Programme. In particular, Italy, France and Spain are the most frequent implementers of the Programme's actions. The Commission notes that Italy, France and Spain, together with Germany, account for approximately three-quarters of all counterfeit euros detected in circulation. They therefore regard the problem of euro counterfeiting with greater concern than other Member States.

The Commission called for greater participation of the competent national authorities. Over the past two years, competent national authorities in Bulgaria, Austria, Portugal and Romania applied for funding for the first time.

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

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.

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

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.