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ANNEX – PART 1/2

ANNEX

to the

COMMISSION DECISION

**on the financing of the Pericles IV programme and the adoption of the annual work
programme for 2025**

1. Introduction

On the basis of the objectives laid down in Regulation (EU) No 2021/840 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing an exchange, assistance and training programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting for the period 2021-2027 (the 'Pericles IV programme'), this work programme contains the actions to be financed and the budget breakdown for the year 2025 as follows:

- a) for grants (implemented under direct management) (point 2): EUR 600 000;
- b) for procurement (implemented under direct management) (point 3): EUR 317 890.30.

a) Legal basis

- Article 10 of Regulation (EU) 2021/840 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing an exchange, assistance and training programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting for the period 2021-2027 (the 'Pericles IV' programme), and repealing Regulation (EU) No 331/2014.
- Article 1 of Council Regulation (EU) 2021/1696 of 21 September 2021 extending to the non-participating Member States the application of Regulation (EU) 2021/840 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an exchange, assistance and training programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting for the period 2021-2027 (the 'Pericles IV programme').

b) Budget line

06 03 01 - Protection of the Euro against counterfeiting

c) Objectives pursued

General objective¹

To prevent and combat counterfeiting and related fraud, preserve the integrity of the euro banknotes and coins, thus strengthening the trust of citizens and business in the genuineness of these banknotes and coins and therefore enhancing the trust the Union's economy, while securing the sustainability of public finances.

Specific objective²:

To protect euro banknotes and coins against counterfeiting and related fraud, by supporting and supplementing the measures undertaken by the Member States and assisting the competent national and Union authorities in their efforts to develop among themselves and with the Commission a close and regular cooperation and an exchange of best practice, where appropriate including third countries and international organisations.

¹ Article 2.1 of the basic act.

² Article 2.2 of the basic act.

Priorities of the Pericles IV strategy for 2025:

The priorities on which the Pericles Programme is based in 2025 are listed in the update of the Pericles Strategy 2025³.

They have been endorsed by the Euro Counterfeiting Experts Group (ECEG), as provided for by Council Regulation (EC) 1338/2001 of 28 June 2001.

They are as follows:

- a. Supporting activities aimed at improving cooperation among those Member States which are particularly affected by the production and distribution of counterfeits.
- b. Fostering cooperation with authorities of third countries where there is suspicion, or evidence of, counterfeit euro production.
- c. Maintaining an efficient framework for the protection of the euro in South Eastern Europe.
- d. Topical developments:
 - I. Distribution of counterfeits and high quality components on the internet/darknet.
 - II. Increase cooperation with customs and judiciary with a specific focus on countering ‘movie money’ and ‘prop copy’ products (including altered design notes).
 - III. Support for the establishment, reinforcement of and networking amongst NCOs.

d) Expected results

- higher capacity of the national experts to address issues related to counterfeiting of the euro;
- strengthening of the cooperation and exchange of information between competent national authorities in relation to the protection of the euro against counterfeiting, both inside and outside the EU;
- improve knowledge on the legislation and administrative practices concerning the protection of the euro;
- harmonisation of the administrative practices in relation to the relevant legislation in different Member States;
- improving cooperation within the European Union and improving its relations with third countries;
- strengthening the technical capacity of third country agencies to investigate euro counterfeiting.

2. Grants

The global budgetary envelope reserved for grants under this work programme is EUR 600 000.

³ Update of the Pericles IV strategy: priority action points (attached as annex II).

a) Type of applicants targeted by the call for proposals

In line with Article 9 of Regulation (EU) No 2021/840, bodies eligible for funding under the Programme shall be the competent national authorities as defined in point (b) of Article 2 of Regulation (EC) No 1338/2001.

b) Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals, as well as of the objectives pursued and the expected results.

The activities of the programme shall be implemented in conformity with Article 5 defining joint actions and Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2021/840 defining multidisciplinary and transnational aspects as well as target groups, and shall include the following eligible actions:

- (a) 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 and other similar actions. (see Art. 6(1)(a) of the basic act);
- (b) technical, scientific and operational assistance, as appears necessary as part of the Programme including in particular the actions mentioned in Art. 6(1)(b) of the basic act;
- (c) grants to finance the purchase of equipment to be used by specialised anti counterfeiting authorities of third countries for protecting the euro against counterfeiting, in compliance with Art.6(1)(c) and Art.7 of the basic act.

c) Implementation

Directly by the DG.

d) Selection criteria - Financial and operational capacity

Financial capacity:

Applicants must have stable and sufficient resources to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share.

Organisations participating in several projects must have sufficient capacity to implement all these projects.

Since all applicants are public authorities (or similar), they are automatically considered to have sufficient financial capacity.

Operational capacity:

Applicants must have the know-how, qualifications and resources to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share (including sufficient experience in projects of comparable size and nature).

Since all applicants are public authorities (or similar), they are automatically considered to have sufficient operational capacity.

e) Award criteria

Applications submitted by the applicants that fulfil the eligibility and selection criteria will be assessed on the basis of the award criteria mentioned below:

– Relevance:

1. Compliance with the Programme's objectives and priorities, and the level of coverage of the various target groups.
2. European dimension, including in particular aspects that relate to cooperation with ECB and Europol.

– Quality:

1. Intrinsic quality of the project in terms of conception, organisation, presentation and objectives.
2. Cost-effectiveness ratio.
3. Risk mitigation measures put in place, in particular options provided for turning the event into hybrid or on-line in case of impediments to the implementation of physical events.

– Impact:

1. Impact and anticipated results on the attainment of the Programme's objectives.
2. Complementarity with previous, current or future projects carried out or planned at national or European level in combating currency counterfeiting.

f) Maximum rate of co-financing

The costs will be reimbursed at the funding rate fixed in the Grant Agreement (75%).

Applicants can apply for a higher project funding rate (90%) in exceptional and duly justified cases⁴.

Such duly justified cases include in particular:

- conferences, seminars and workshops taking place in, and staff exchanges with a majority of participants belonging to, China, Peru, Colombia⁵, Kosovo⁶ and/or Türkiye⁷.
- actions specifically devoted to priority action point d.II of the Pericles IV 2025 strategy;
- actions introduced by competent national authorities that were not among the beneficiaries of Pericles funding in the calendar years 2022, 2023 and 2024 in order to encourage greater participation of the competent national authorities.

⁴ Article 8 of the basic act.

⁵ Identified in priority action point b. of the Pericles IV 2025 strategy: Update of the Pericles IV strategy: priority action points (attached as annex II).

⁶ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

⁷ As referred to in priority action c. of the Pericles IV 2025 strategy.

3. *Procurement*

The global budgetary envelope reserved for procurement contracts in 2025 is EUR 317 890.30 on the Protection of the Euro against counterfeiting (Pericles IV programme) budget line.

- a) General description of the contracts envisaged (study / technical assistance / evaluation / survey / IT / communication services/etc.)

Specific contracts based on existing framework contracts of the Commission.

The procured actions will focus on the implementation of the Pericles Strategy 2025:

- Events, conferences, staff exchanges and training actions
- Studies
- IT development services

- b) Implementation

Directly by the DG.