



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE GENERAL  
ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS  
Resources and communication  
Euro Protection and Pericles

## The 'Pericles 2020' programme

### CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Ref. 2015 ECFIN 007/R6

addressed to the Member States' Competent National Authorities<sup>1</sup>

**The deadlines for submission of the applications for this call for proposals are 1 June and 14 September 2015.**

**Estimated budget is 300 000 € per deadline (600 000 € in total).**

The 'Pericles 2020' programme was adopted by 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).

The present document aims to provide specific guidelines for the implementation of the programme in 2015, in terms of further clarifying and prioritising its objectives and providing practical information for applying. The guidelines refer to the following areas:

- objectives of the programme and priorities particularly for 2015;
- target groups and actions eligible for a grant;
- selection criteria and financial provisions;
- procedure for submission of projects and lead-time for project approval.

### **1. Objectives and priorities of the 'Pericles 2020' programme**

Counterfeiting continues to be a major threat for the euro. According to the most recent bi-annual information on euro banknotes prepared by the ECB<sup>2</sup>, "In the second half of 2014 a total of 507,000 counterfeit euro banknotes were withdrawn from circulation –

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<sup>1</sup> Referred to in Article 2 (b) of the Council Regulation (EC) No 1338/2001 published in the OJ L 181, 04.07.2001, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> ECB press release of 23 January 2015.

44% up on the figure for the same period in 2013". The most counterfeited denominations are 20 and 50 euros (86 % of the counterfeits). In 2014 the number of counterfeit euro coins found in circulation has remained below 200 000 pieces per year. However, for the first time, in 2014 more counterfeit coins were seized before entering circulation than were found in circulation, due to a law enforcement action in Italy. The total value of counterfeit coins removed from circulation in 2014 was EUR 870 789, far higher than the amount in 2013, which was EUR 283 000<sup>3</sup>.

The 2013 SOCTA confirms that the enlargement of the Eurozone, together with the global acceptance of the euro as a stable currency and the evolution towards 'easily' available hologram emulations, is likely to create new opportunities for organised crime within and outside the EU<sup>4</sup>.

The general objective of the 'Pericles 2020' programme (the Programme) is to prevent and combat counterfeiting and related fraud, thus enhancing the competitiveness of the Union's economy and securing the sustainability of public finances. As the successor of the 'Pericles' programme<sup>5</sup>, this Programme continues the exchange, assistance and training programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020. The Programme runs for a period of seven years to align its duration with that of the multiannual financial framework laid down in Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013<sup>6</sup>.

The specific objective of the Programme is 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, together with the Commission, a close and regular cooperation and an exchange of best practice, including third countries and international organisations when appropriate. Under this Programme, proposals presented by Member States may include participation from third countries, when their participation is important for the protection of the euro.

The priorities to implement the actions of the Programme for 2015 are the following<sup>7</sup>:

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

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<sup>3</sup> Infograph of the week of 23 March 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Europol Serious Organised Crime Threat Assessment 2013.

<sup>5</sup> 2001/923/ EC, OJ L 339, 21.12.2001, pp. 50-54.

<sup>6</sup> Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 of December 2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020 (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p.884).

<sup>7</sup> The priorities of the Programme for 2015 are laid out in the Annual Work Programme, which is annexed to Commission Decision C(2015) 2473 of 17 April 2015 concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2015 of the Pericles 2020 Programme.

The programme will be implemented by the following actions<sup>8</sup>:

- 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. The exchange of information shall inter alia be targeted at:**
- methodologies for monitoring and analysing the economic and financial impact of counterfeiting;
  - operation of databases and early warning systems;
  - use of detection tools with computer back-up;
  - enquiry and investigation methods;
  - scientific assistance, in particular scientific databases and technology watch/ monitoring of new developments;
  - protection of the euro outside the Union;
  - research actions;
  - provision of specific operational expertise.
- b) **Technical, scientific and operational assistance, as appears necessary as part of the Programme, including in particular:**
- any appropriate measure which establishes teaching resources at Union level, such as a handbook of Union legislation, information bulletins, practical manuals, glossaries and lexicons, databases, especially in the area of scientific assistance or technology watch or computer support applications, such as software.
  - relevant studies with a multidisciplinary and transnational dimension.
  - development of technical support instruments and methods to facilitate detection actions at Union level.
  - financial support for cooperation in operations involving at least two States when such support is not available from other programmes of European institutions and bodies.
- 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, whereby the purchase of equipment shall not be the sole component of the grant agreement.**

## **2. Target groups**

The measures shall target the following groups<sup>9</sup>:

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<sup>8</sup> Art. 8 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)

- Staff of agencies engaged in detecting and combating counterfeiting, in particular police forces and financial administrations, depending on their specific functions at national level;
- Customs;
- Intelligence personnel;
- Representatives of the national central banks, the mints, commercial banks and other other financial intermediaries, in particular as regards the obligations of financial institutions;
- Judicial officers, specialist lawyers and members of the judiciary in this field;
- Any other group of specialists concerned, such as chambers of commerce and industry or comparable structures capable of providing access to small and medium-sized enterprises, retailers and cash-in-transit companies.

Participation in the Programme is open to candidate countries and third countries.<sup>10</sup>

### **3. Eligibility, exclusion, selection and award criteria**

All requests for financing must be submitted to the Commission under the conditions specified in the basic act<sup>11</sup> and in accordance with the calls for proposals. The Commission selects the projects submitted by the Member States on the basis of the following criteria:

#### a. Eligibility criteria

- 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.<sup>12</sup>
  - Beneficiaries shall be the Member States having adopted the euro as their single currency.<sup>13</sup>
  - To be eligible for co-financing, measures must demonstrate the transnational and multidisciplinary aspects of the fight against counterfeiting.
- Supporting documents

Applicants and their affiliated entities must provide proof of their legal entity by filling in the standard legal entity form.

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<sup>9</sup> Art. 7 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)

<sup>10</sup> Art. 6 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)

<sup>11</sup> 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)

<sup>12</sup> Art. 5 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)

<sup>13</sup> Art. 6 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). Once Council Regulation extending to the non-participating Member States the application of Regulation (EU) No 331/2014 establishing an exchange, assistance and training programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting (the 'Pericles 2020' programme) enters into force, the competent national authorities of the non-participating countries will be able to benefit from the programme.

## b. Exclusion criteria

### b.1 Exclusion from participation

Applicants will be excluded from participation in the call for proposals procedure if they are in any of the following situations:

- a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of a Member State which has the force of *res judicata*;
- c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify including by decisions of the EIB and international organizations;
- d) they are not in compliance with their obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the responsible authorising officer (RAO) or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- e) they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organization, money laundering or any other illegal activity, where such illegal activity is detrimental to the Union's financial interests;
- f) they are subject to an administrative penalty referred to in Article 109(1) of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the Union and its rules of application.

### b.2 Exclusion from award

Applicants will not be granted financial assistance if, in the course of the grant award procedure, they:

- a) are subject to a conflict of interests;
- b) are guilty of misrepresenting the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the procurement procedure or fail to supply that information;
- c) find themselves in one of the situations of exclusion, as referred to in section b.1.

The same exclusion criteria apply to affiliated entities.

Administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants, or affiliated entities where applicable, who are guilty of misrepresentation.

#### - Supporting documents

- Applicants and their affiliated entities must all sign a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations listed under sections b.1 and b.2, by filling in the standard declaration.

- However, when the requested total grant amount in the proposal does not exceed 60 000 EUR (hereafter referred to as 'low value grant ≤ 60 000 EUR'), the requested declaration on honour for the exclusion criteria will not be required.

#### c. Selection criteria

- In accordance with Article 132 of the Financial Regulation and Article 202 of the Rules of Application, applicants shall be assessed on their *operational capacity* and must therefore describe their operational resources (technical, management) and the professional skills and qualifications needed to successfully implement the proposed action.
- The applicant shall also demonstrate that it has the *financial capacity* enabling it to perform the tasks involved in the project. The financial capacity requirement does not apply to public bodies.
- Supporting documents to be provided by applicants other than public bodies:

For applicants with a grant > 60 000 EUR:

- The standard table containing a 'simplified presentation of the balance sheet and profit and loss account' for the two last financial years for which accounts have been closed. When requested, the applicant shall also provide further information;
- A declaration on honour as provided for in the application form.

For a low value grant ≤ 60 000 EUR:

- a declaration on honour as provided for in the application form will be sufficient.

#### d. Award criteria

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

- compliance with the Programme's objectives and specific target groups as defined above - *30 points*;
- compatibility with work being carried out or planned as part of EU action in the field of combating currency counterfeiting - *10 points*;
- European dimension, including in particular aspects that relate to cooperation with the ECB and Europol - *10 points*;
- complementarity with previous, current or future projects - *15 points*;
- the intrinsic quality of the project in terms of its conception, organisation, presentation and objectives - *10 points*;
- cost-effectiveness ratio - *10 points*;
- the impact of the anticipated results on the attainment of the Programme's objectives - *10 points*;
- innovative training methods, such as e-learning and training for trainers activities - *5 points*.

#### **4. Financial provisions**

The total reference appropriation for implementing the Programme for the period from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020 is EUR 7 344 000.<sup>14</sup>

The maximum contribution for the implementation of the Programme for the year 2015 is set at EUR 1 024 800, and shall be financed from the following line of the general budget of the European Union for 2015, budget line 24 03 01 00<sup>15</sup>.

The indicative overall budgetary allocation reserved for grants in 2015 amounts to € 600 000.

The Commission financial contribution takes the form of a grant agreement under Article 121 of the Financial Regulation of the European Union<sup>16</sup>. The maximum rate of co-financing by the Commission is 75% of the total eligible costs incurred for the action. In exceptional and duly justified cases, the co-financing rate shall not exceed 90% of the eligible costs<sup>17</sup>.

Such duly justified cases include in particular:

- Conferences, seminars and workshops taking place outside the EU and having as a main target staff from third countries particularly affected by production and distribution of counterfeits.
- Actions organised by Authorities from Member States entering the euro area.
- Actions organised by Authorities applying for the first time.

Relevant costs are eligible in conformity with the Financial Regulation of the European Union and its rules of application<sup>18</sup>. Further information on eligible costs can be found in the Pericles 2020 Financial Guidelines for Applicants and the model grant agreement.

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<sup>14</sup> Art. 9 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)

<sup>15</sup> Article 2 Commission Decision C(2015) 2473 of 17 April 2015 concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2015 of the Pericles 2020 Programme.

<sup>16</sup> Regulation (EU, EURATOM) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council

<sup>17</sup> Art. 10 (4) 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)

<sup>18</sup> Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012 on the rules of application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union

## **5. Procedures for applying and deadlines**

### **a. Standard forms to use and documentation**

The standard forms referred to in the present Call for Proposals, as well as the Pericles 2020 financial guidelines for applicants and model of grant agreement can be consulted and/or downloaded from the following link [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/economy\\_finance/procurement\\_grants/grants/proposals/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/economy_finance/procurement_grants/grants/proposals/index_en.htm) at Directorate General Economic and Financial Affairs' dedicated website to calls for proposals. Then, please further select the relevant call under reference '2015 ECFIN 007/R6'.

### **b. Submission of applications**

One original and one copy of the grant application form and of all requisite documents MUST be sent BY POST (preferably by means of REGISTERED MAIL) (date of postmark serving as evidence of date of sending) or BY COURIER SERVICES (date of deposit slip serving as evidence of date of sending) to the following address within the set deadlines stipulated in point c. below:

<b>BY POST OR COURIER SERVICES (ONE ORIGINAL, ONE COPY)</b>	<b>Call 2015 ECFIN 007 PERICLES</b> to the attention of Mr Johan VERHAEVEN Head of Unit ECFIN R3 <b>Financial Management and Control</b> Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs (ECFIN) Office CHAR, 13/056 B-1040 Brussels Belgium
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**OR DELIVERED BY HAND**, in person or by an authorised representative (date of acknowledgement of receipt by the Commission serving as evidence of date of sending) to the following address:

<b>BY HAND (ONE ORIGINAL, ONE COPY)</b>	Main entrance of the building of the European Commission's Central Mail Department Avenue du Bourget 1 - B-1140 Brussels (Evere) This service is open from 8h to 17h from Monday to Thursday and from 8h to 16h on Friday; it is closed on Saturday, Sunday and Commission Holidays.  With the following message:  <b>Call 2015 ECFIN 007 PERICLES</b> to the attention of Mr Johan VERHAEVEN Head of Unit ECFIN R3 <b>Financial Management and Control</b>
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	Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs (ECFIN) Office CHAR, 13/056 B-1040 Brussels Belgium
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The grant application form, the 'estimated budget' and all requisite documents **MUST ALSO** be sent by **ELECTRONIC MAIL** to the following address.

<b>BY EMAIL</b>	<a href="mailto:ECFIN-PERICLES@ec.europa.eu">ECFIN-PERICLES@ec.europa.eu</a>
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For applications to be admissible they must be submitted using the official application form in one of the European Union languages. A version of the summary of the project and its expected results in English or French, non-compulsory, will facilitate examination of the file.

The **signed** application form must be submitted in original and copy format. Alterations to the form will disqualify the application.

In order to be valid, the application has to include the following documents:

- the grant application form, duly completed, dated, signed and containing a detailed description of the project (including agenda) and accompanied by the required documents where applicable;
- the estimated budget in euro, indicating estimated itemised costs

### **c. Timetable for submission and evaluation of applications, and awarding phase**

The **deadlines** for submission of the applications for this call for proposal are **1 June 2015** (estimated budget is 300 000 €) and **14 September 2015** (estimated budget is 300 000 €).

Applications presented by 1 June 2015 must refer to projects to be implemented after **15 October 2015**.

Applications presented by 14 September 2015 must refer to projects to be implemented after **1 January 2016**.

A specific evaluation committee will analyse and evaluate the projects received.

Subject to availability of appropriations, the evaluation committee will hold two evaluation sessions in order to examine the applications sent by the deadlines indicated in the call for proposals. In the event that the proposals received are not sufficient in number or in quality to allow for the allocation of all of the budgeted sums, a second call for proposals will be launched in early fourth quarter with a budget corresponding to the residual funding compared to the amount of EUR 600 000 available for grants and the evaluation committee will hold a third evaluation session.

During each session, the evaluation committee will analyse the valid and complete project proposals officially postmarked or received (in case of delivery by hand) **before 5 p.m. (Monday-Thursday) and 4 p.m. Friday (Brussels time)** of:

- **1 June 2015** (estimated budget of 300 000 €);
- **14 September 2015** (estimated budget of 300 000 €);

Please find herewith an **indicative schedule** :

Publication of the call	May 2015	May 2015
Deadline for submitting applications	<b>1 June 2015</b>	<b>14 September 2015</b>
Evaluation period	June 2015	September/October 2015
Information to applicants	June/July 2015	October/November 2015
Signature of grant agreements	September/October 2015	December 2015
Starting date of the action	After 15 October 2015	After 1 January 2016

An evaluation will be made and it is expected that a final decision will be taken on each of the proposals received during the fifteen working days after the above deadlines.

The maximum delay for applicants to be informed on the outcome of the evaluation is six months from the submission deadline, plus an additional three months for the signature of the grant agreements<sup>19</sup>.

The final approval of successful projects will be communicated to the successful applicants by official letter, together with a grant agreement to be signed and to be returned to the Commission.

The other applicants will be informed at the latest within fifteen calendar days after the award decision has been sent to the successful applicants.

A period of roughly 5 weeks may be necessary from the approval of the grant application until the final signature of the grant by the Commission.

The signature of the grant agreement by both parties will allow the Commission to make available a pre-financing of 50% of the approved grant within 30 calendar days from the date of the Commission's final signature.

Upon request from the applicant, the Commission can decide to increase this pre-financing payment to a maximum of 70% of the approved grant, when at least one of the following conditions applies:

- the majority of the action is implemented in a Third Country and the final payment of suppliers cannot be postponed;

<sup>19</sup> Art. 128 (2) of Regulation (EU, EURATOM) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

- the applicant does not have its own specific budget available to advance payments;
- the effective implementation of the action is at risk without an increased advanced payment.

The remaining part of that grant will be paid upon reception and approval of the final documents supporting the expenditure incurred as specified in the Special Conditions of the grant agreement.

## **6. Follow-up and evaluation**

In compliance with the signed grant agreement and at the latest within three months following the completion of the action, the grant beneficiaries shall submit to the Commission:

- a final financial statement together with justifying documents for all real expenses and proofs of payments;
- a final technical report together with all attachments required.

The final financial statement (in excel) and the final technical report (in word) shall be submitted in the required standard forms and also be sent electronically to the email-address specified in the grant agreement.

The Commission may request the beneficiary additional information on the implementation of the project.<sup>20</sup>

Upon completion of the projects, the Commission will evaluate their implementation and impact, assessing the achievement of the initial objectives.

## **7. Means of redress**

At all stages of the administrative handling of grant files, whenever persons or bodies involved consider that they are the victim of maladministration, they may, independently of any other avenue of appeal, submit a complaint to the European Ombudsman (<http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu>).

## **8. Annexes**

- Standard Grant application form
- Standard form Simplified presentation balance sheet and profit & loss account
- Standard form Estimated budget for the action
- Standard Declaration of honour on exclusion criteria and absence of conflict of interest
- Model grant agreement and its annexes
- Pericles 2020 Financial guidelines for applicants

The aforementioned forms and documents are available from:

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/economy\\_finance/procurement\\_grants/grants/proposals/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/economy_finance/procurement_grants/grants/proposals/index_en.htm)

- Standard legal entity form  
[http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts\\_grants/info\\_contracts/legal\\_entities/legal\\_entities\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm)
- Standard financial identification form  
[http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts\\_grants/info\\_contracts/financial\\_id/financial\\_id\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial_id_en.cfm)

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<sup>20</sup> See for instance Art. 12 (3) of 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).