

Regulation proposal regarding the promotion of activities in the field of the protection of EU's financial interests

The protection of EU's financial interests reflects the basic targets and objectives of the European Union to suppress the illegal traffic of products as well as counterfeiting activities within EU Member States. Hercule I and II, as well as Pericles constitute the means and the tools with the aid of which, relevant European and national authorities will be empowered to take all the measures needed and execute the harmonised strategy of the Union.

The Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) recognises the need and expresses the public concern about the protection of the Union's financial interests by providing all the necessary measures, means and tools to regional, national and European authorities (Article 325 TFEU). In the present context of budgetary shrinkage and the beginning of negotiations for the multi-annual financial framework of 2014-2020, the importance of the public trust and the Union's capacity to protect its citizens gains, place and becomes indispensable especially, in the difficult years after the financial crisis.

The new provisions, providing a wider dissemination of anti-fraud and anti-corruption measures, state the necessity and the importance to elaborate a close and regular cooperation between the competent national authorities and OLAF in order to implement the objectives of the Treaty.

The acquisition of commercially available data sources of value facilitates a common approach to risk analysis by Member States and allows the creation of shared frameworks allowing more efficient actions and flexibility.

Further, the development of a legal framework including legal professionals, both practitioners and academics, will create a strategic legislative and legal framework, which will provide solutions to individual problems in the several national legal systems in the field of the protection of the Union's financial interests.

Finally, a continuous dialogue between the relevant national authorities and OLAF needs to be financially supported by Hercules and Pericles in order to develop the sector of technical assistance and create the poles for the efficient feedback needed.

The budgetary implication covering the programme for the period 2014-2020, amounts to an envelope of 110.000.000 Euro, which is in line with the budget for Europe 2020.

On the other hand, Pericles programme consists an exchange, assistance and training programme for the protection of the Euro against counterfeiting. Its objective is to strengthen the protection of Eurobank notes and coins in Europe and worldwide. It also aims at ensuring equivalence and homogeneity throughout EU Member States.

The multi-disciplinary and transnational actions organised under Pericles, are addressed to national law enforcement authorities, national central banks as well as judicial institutions and commercial banks. They focus on delivering specific assistance to Member States in order to improve cooperation between competent authorities.

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