

PRESS KIT Euro banknotes and coins









Foreword



New Year's Day 2009 will be an historic day for the European Union. On this date, Slovakia will join Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Slovenia and Finland in the euro area and will adopt the euro as its currency.

This press kit has been prepared by the European Central Bank to provide the media – and the Slovak media in particular – with comprehensive information about the euro banknotes and coins. The euro will become part of everyday life in Slovakia at the beginning of next year, and the European Central Bank and Národná banka Slovenska have a common interest in ensuring that the public is well informed ahead of the changeover. The media's access to authoritative information and images makes them a major partner in the process of acquainting the public with the euro banknotes and coins and their security features.

This press kit provides you with information on the euro changeover in Slovakia and on the euro banknotes and coins and their security features. We hope it will serve as a useful point of reference for your reporting.

I wish you every success in informing the general public about the euro and its banknotes and coins. The knowledge and information you pass on will make a very significant contribution to increasing awareness of the single currency. This is particularly true for the media covering Slovakia, where your reporting will pave the way for the citizens of this country to adopt the euro, our money.

Frankfurt am Main, September 2008

lean-Claude Trichet

President of the European Central Bank

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Introduction

The European Central Bank (ECB) and Národná banka Slovenska have produced this press kit containing information about the cash changeover and the euro banknotes. This press kit is accompanied by a DVD, which you will be provided with once you have signed a disclaimer. This DVD contains a PowerPoint presentation and a flash application on the security features of the euro banknotes. It also contains high-resolution images of euro banknotes and coins, as well as images of citizens in cash-handling situations.

These images may be used for publication, but only for reporting in connection with the public information campaigns related to the euro. You will be asked to sign a disclaimer to ensure the appropriate use of the enclosed images. Furthermore, the rules on the reproduction of euro banknotes must be complied with.

Should you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact Národná banka Slovenska or the European Central Bank. The European

Central Bank will be happy to provide you with publications on the history, role and functions of the European Central Bank, the Eurosystem and the European System of Central Banks, on the monetary policy of the Eurosystem, and on banking supervision in the euro area and the European Union. You can also request publications produced for the euro cash changeover in Slovakia, which contain information on euro banknotes and coins and their security features.²

Additional information can be obtained from:

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 $^{^{\}rm I} \ {\hbox{To see} the rules on reproduction of euro banknotes, visit www.ecb.europa.eu/bc/reproduction/html/index.en.html}$

² Please visit www.ecb.europa.eu/bc/euro/material/html/index.en.html

Euro cash changeover in Slovakia

Following the approval by the Council of the European Union on 8 July 2008, the euro will become legal tender in the Slovak Republic on 1 January 2009. On this date all Slovak koruna balances in bank accounts will be converted into euro automatically and free of charge. Furthermore, as of this date only euro will be used in electronic payments.

The dual circulation period will last from I to I6 January 2009. During this period it will be possible to pay with either Slovak koruna (SKK) or euro banknotes and coins. As of I7 January 2009 only euro banknotes and coins will be accepted for cash payments in Slovakia.

Slovak banks will exchange Slovak koruna banknotes and coins for euro banknotes and coins at the irrevocably fixed conversion rate of €1 = SKK 30.1260. It will be possible to exchange Slovak koruna banknotes throughout 2009, while banks will exchange Slovak koruna coins until the

end of June 2009. Banks will be allowed to charge a fee for exchanged amounts exceeding 100 banknotes or 100 coins per transaction per customer.

Otherwise, such transactions will be free of charge.

Thereafter, it will be possible, at Národná banka Slovenska, to exchange Slovak koruna banknotes for an unlimited period of time and Slovak koruna coins until 31 December 2013. An overview of the deadlines for the exchange of Slovak koruna banknotes and coins is provided below.



Introduction of the euro in Slovakia

Key changeover dates	Date
"Sub-frontloading" of coins to companies	November 2008
"Sub-frontloading" of banknotes to companies	November 2008
Account conversions and introduction of the euro banknotes and coins	I January 2009
Last day on which Slovak koruna banknotes and coins will be legal tender	16 January 2009
Exchange of Slovak koruna coins at banks	until 30 June 2009
Exchange of Slovak koruna banknotes at banks	until 31 December 2009
Exchange of Slovak koruna coins at Národná banka Slovenska	until 31 December 2013
Exchange of Slovak koruna banknotes at Národná banka Slovenska	indefinite period

Irrevocable conversion rate

€I = SKK 30.1260

Euro cash changeover in 2002 and subsequent developments



The euro came into existence with the irrevocable fixing of exchange rates on I January 1999.3 However, it was initially the currency of the financial and foreign exchange markets. In the eyes of many people, the euro only arrived with the introduction of euro banknotes and coins. A huge logistical undertaking took place in the run-up to I January 2002, when the euro banknotes and coins were introduced. Altogether some 15 billion banknotes were produced, enough to cover 15,000 football pitches, while around 52 billion coins, the equivalent of 10,000 truckloads, were minted. These volumes were required both to meet initial demand and to provide stocks for the national central banks (NCBs) of the euro area. Banks, shops, security carriers and the cashoperated machine industry were all well prepared: the successful adaptation of their businesses contributed significantly to the smooth introduction of the new banknotes and coins.

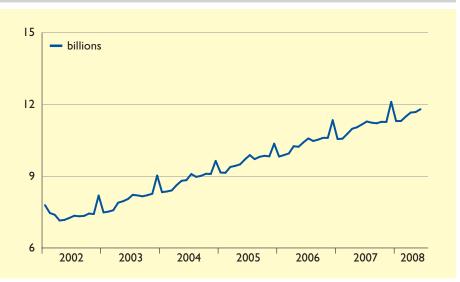
Did you know that ...

... by mid-January 2002 over 90% of all cash transactions were being carried out in euro, although two months had been foreseen for the transition? Consequently, most of the future members of the euro area might well opt for a shorter dual circulation period.

So did the swift acceptance of euro banknotes and coins by the then 300 million or so citizens of the euro area. Since their introduction the number of banknotes in circulation has grown steadily. At the end of June 2008 some II billion banknotes, worth roughly €677 billion, were in circulation (compared with close to 8 billion banknotes, worth €221 billion, at the beginning of 2002). Euro banknotes and coins are legal tender throughout the euro area, regardless of where they were produced. They cross borders in Europe freely as a result of tourism and business transactions. The euro has also become a popular currency worldwide. It is estimated that, in value terms, 10-20% of the euro banknotes in circulation – potentially a figure towards the upper end of that range – are held by individuals and businesses outside the euro area, which are using the euro either as a store of value or as a parallel currency.

Slovenia successfully joined the euro area on I January 2007, followed by Cyprus and Malta on I January 2008. On I January 2009 Slovakia will likewise join the euro area, becoming its 16th member country.

Total number of euro banknotes in circulation between January 2002 and June 2008



³ For more detailed information, please see www.ecb.europa.eu/press/pr/date/1998/html/pr981231_2.en.html and www.ecb.europa.eu/press/pr/date/2001/html/pr010102.en.html

What do euro banknotes look like?

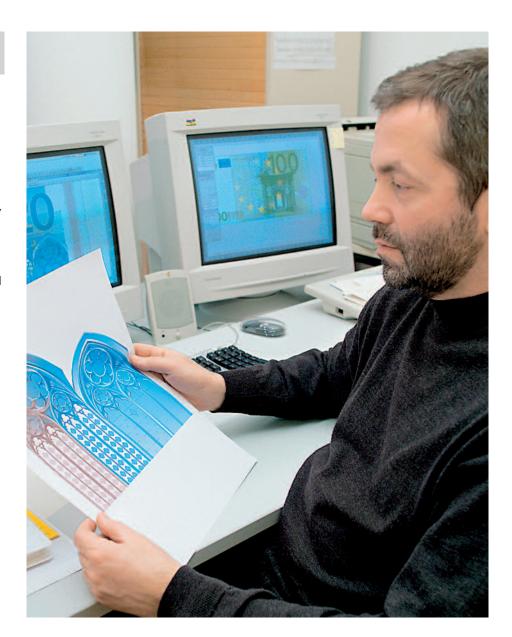
Design competition and public survey

The conceptual phase of the creation of the euro banknotes began in February 1996, when the European Monetary Institute (EMI), the forerunner of the ECB, launched a design competition.

A total of 44 design proposals were submitted,4 and in September 1996 a jury of independent experts in marketing, advertising, design and art judged the designs. The jury drew up two shortlists: one of five design series on the "Ages and styles of Europe" theme and another of five design series on a "Modern/abstract" theme. A European market and opinion research organisation was then commissioned to carry out a survey of public acceptance of the shortlisted designs. Around 2,000 individuals participated throughout Europe. 5 Taking account of the advice given by the jury and the results of the public consultation, the EMI Council selected, in December 1996, the series submitted by Robert Kalina, a banknote designer at the Oesterreichische Nationalbank.

His design was inspired by the theme "Ages and styles of Europe" and depicted the architectural styles of seven periods in Europe's cultural history. These styles are shown on the seven euro banknotes:

- Classical for the €5
- Romanesque for the €10
- Gothic for the €20
- Renaissance for the €50
- Baroque and rococo for the €100
- Iron and glass architecture for the €200
- Modern 20th century architecture for the €500



 $^{^4}$ To see the design proposals, visit www.ecb.europa.eu/bc/pdf/banknotes/euro_catalogue.pdf

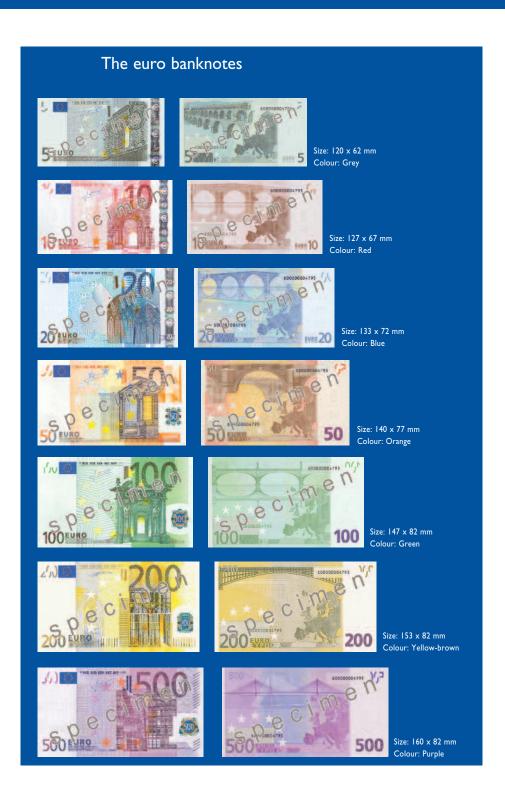
⁵ To see the results of the survey, visit www.ecb.europa.eu/bc/history/issue/html/index.en.html

What do euro banknotes look like?

On the front of the banknotes, windows and doorways symbolise the European spirit of openness and cooperation. The 12 stars of the European Union represent the dynamism and harmony of the European nations.

To complement these designs, the reverse of each banknote features a bridge. The bridges symbolise the close cooperation and communication between Europe and the rest of the world. The images are based on the typical architectural style of each period, rather than on specific structures. These designs, and the following features, are presented in more detail in the euro banknote pictures opposite:

- the name of the currency euro in both the Latin (EURO) and the Greek (EYPΩ) alphabets;
- the initials of the European Central Bank in five linguistic variants – BCE, ECB, EZB, EKT and EKP – covering the then 11 official languages of the European Union;
- the symbol © indicating copyright protection;
- the signature of the President of the European Central Bank;
- the flag of the European Union.



What do euro coins look like?



Production of euro banknotes

From cotton fields to paper mills

Perhaps symbolic of the euro's status as a major international currency, the raw material for the banknotes comes from different regions of the world. Cotton grown in the American South, in Africa or on the steppes of Central Asia is the basic ingredient in euro banknote "paper", which is in fact made from pure cotton fibres. The fibres cannot be used by the textile industry, as they are too short for weaving, so they are bought by paper mills, which turn them into cotton paper. This is what gives euro banknotes their special "feel" and crispness, as well as their durability. They are more robust and better withstand a certain amount of rough treatment than most other types of paper. The cotton fibres are bleached in water at high pressure and high temperatures.

The paper pulp is then fed into a paper machine. Security paper forms the substrate or basis for producing banknotes, and certain security features, such as watermarks or embedded threads, are integrated into the paper itself. The watermark, for example, is obtained by varying the paper thickness during the paper-making process; some parts become more transparent or lighter than the surrounding paper, while other parts become darker.



Did you know that ...

... the euro banknotes in Slovakia will come from the Eurosystem's banknote stocks?

... Slovakia's euro coins will be produced by Kremnica Mint in Slovakia?

Turning banknote paper into banknotes

Banknote paper is distributed to the 14 high-security printing works in Europe that produce euro banknotes. There are two main processes: offset and intaglio printing. Different types of plates and special inks have to be used for these processes. Each plate is generally used to print over half a million sheets, and these, in turn, are cut into around 25 million banknotes. Approximately 40,000 sheets can be produced in an eight-hour shift, i.e. around 2 million banknotes. Both sides of a banknote can be printed simultaneously using offset printing machines. Intaglio printing also contributes to the special "feel" of euro banknotes: users can check they are genuine by running their fingers across the large numerals or the windows and doorways on the front.

In order to print in relief, intaglio plates with special inks are applied to the paper with a force of some 30 tonnes. In addition to these traditional banknote printing techniques, a hot stamping process is used to apply a hologram foil. The colour-changing number on the back of the higher-value denominations is applied using silk screen printing. Each banknote receives a unique serial number consisting of one letter and 11 digits.

Many additional features are included to help the public, as well as professional cash handlers and central banks, to determine if a banknote is genuine or counterfeit.

Extensive testing prior to circulation

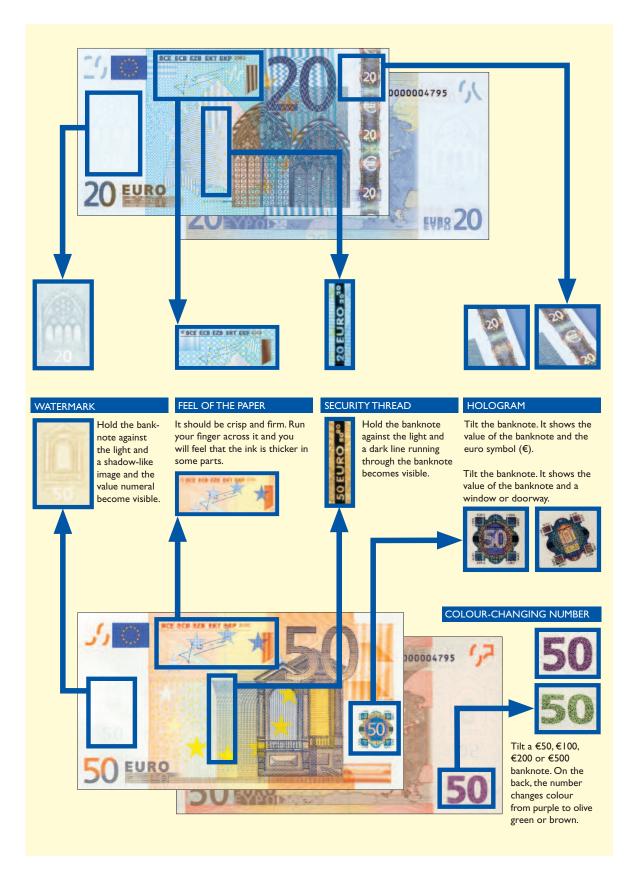
To ensure the consistent quality of euro banknotes, the ECB has devised a common quality management system for all the banknote printing works. Throughout the production process, hundreds of manual and automated tests are performed to ensure that the banknotes meet the ECB's standards. For example, the banknotes are subjected to tearing, soiling and even washing machine tests to measure their resistance.







Euro banknote security features



Euro banknote distribution

Ready for distribution

Once the quality specifications have been met and the banknote sheets cut up, the individual banknotes are packaged up by denomination and stored in secure areas at the printing works prior to distribution. They are first taken from the printing works to the national central banks, which place them in their vaults. Národná banka Slovenska will cover its initial requirements in terms of euro banknotes by drawing on the stocks of the Eurosystem. In the years to come it will "pay back" these banknotes.

To ensure a smooth and rapid changeover to the euro, Národná banka Slovenska will begin predistributing euro banknotes to commercial banks in October 2008, with coins distributed from September 2008. Some of this cash will be passed on to retailers and other companies ("sub-frontloading").



... Národná banka Slovenska will acquire 188 million euro banknotes to replace the Slovak koruna? These would cover the surface of the Štrbské Pleso lake more than nine times. If these banknotes were placed end to end, they would stretch 25,000 kilometres, 50 times the distance between Bratislava and the European Central Bank in Frankfurt.

... 500 million euro coins will initially be minted for Slovakia? Placed on top of one another, these would form 364 columns, each as tall as the Gerlach peak. And if the coins were distributed to all the citizens of Slovakia, each person would receive 96 coins.





Organisation of banknote production / Stock and circulation management

Organisation of banknote production

Prior to the introduction of euro cash, each central bank was responsible for producing its own national banknotes. Since 2002, banknote production has been reorganised in a "pooling scenario". Under this arrangement, each central bank is responsible for producing a limited number of denominations. It does so to meet the need for those particular denominations throughout the euro area. This division of labour enables the Eurosystem to benefit from economies of scale. It also helps in the efficient operation of the Quality Management System, as there are fewer production sites for each denomination than there would be without any pooling.⁷ Each year the ECB and the national central banks forecast the likely overall banknote demand, taking into account the estimated growth in circulation and the replacement of "unfit" banknotes, i.e. worn or dirty banknotes which no longer meet the set quality standards. The banknote production shares are then allocated to the NCBs according to a key. 10.7 billion banknotes will be produced in 2009. Only printing works which are both quality and securityaccredited by the ECB can contribute to this output.

Stock and circulation management

The NCBs ensure a smooth and efficient supply of euro banknotes. Potential demand from the market for any denomination can be met at any time and in the desired quantity, since the NCBs hold banknote stocks. They hold these stocks for three reasons: firstly, to replace "unfit" banknotes; secondly, to accommodate increases in demand, such as seasonal fluctuations (e.g. the increased use of cash around Christmas); and thirdly, to meet any unexpected demand. A Eurosystem database, administered by the ECB, makes it possible to monitor changes in circulation figures and stocks. The migration of banknotes between different countries leads to imbalances in the NCBs' stocks. If one NCB is about to run short of a specific banknote denomination, another NCB with a surplus of that denomination transports the required number of banknotes by road and/or air in a matter of days. This flexibility has brought efficiency gains, as it allows NCBs to hold smaller stocks.

When the banknotes leave the printing works they are of identical quality. But their quality deteriorates during circulation: €5 banknotes, for example, become worn and crumpled more

quickly than €50 banknotes, as they are generally treated with less care and pass from hand to hand more often. A €5 banknote lasts, on average, I3 months before being withdrawn from circulation and destroyed, while a €50 banknote circulates for 3.5 years. NCBs use high-speed sorting machines to process banknotes deposited by commercial banks and security carriers.

These machines can check the genuineness and condition of a banknote in a fraction of a second. Banknotes which are no longer fit for circulation because they are dirty or limp, or have fragments missing, etc. are immediately shredded. Only clean banknotes are reissued. If banknotes deteriorate in quality during circulation, for example through wear or soiling, they could become more difficult to use, for example in vending machines. The resulting lack of public trust in the banknotes could lead to them becoming less widely used as a means of payment. Also, security features on clean banknotes are easier to check than those on soiled banknotes. To this extent, common minimum sorting standards contribute to the integrity of the euro. In cases where banknotes do not often return to the NCBs, maintaining the quality level of banknotes in circulation is a challenging task. In particular, €5 banknotes, which typically pass from consumers to retailers and back again, instead of being deposited, have a relatively low return frequency. Some NCBs have therefore created incentives for the more frequent depositing of €5 banknotes or have temporarily issued only freshly printed banknotes. The ECB monitors the quality of banknotes in circulation through annual sample surveys. Over the longer term, the Eurosystem is working on projects which aim to enhance the durability of euro banknotes.



⁷ For further information on the production scenario, see www.ecb.europa.eu/bc/faqbc/printing/html/index.en.html

Banknote recycling framework

The efficiency of the handling of cash in the cash cycle can be improved if banks recirculate ("recycle") banknotes which they receive from their customers. This avoids banks transporting banknotes back to the central bank before withdrawing them again. On the other hand, euro banknotes recycled within the credit sector need to be properly checked for authenticity and fitness in order to protect the integrity of euro banknotes. To this end, in 2004 the ECB adopted a framework for banknote

Did you know that ...

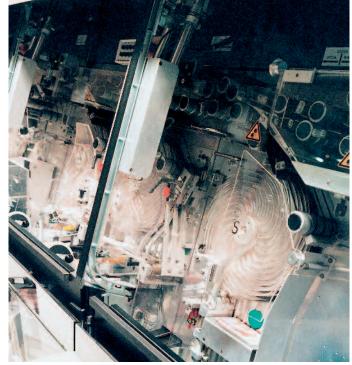
... banks can only reissue banknotes via their cash dispensers if the notes have been checked by banknote-handling machines which detect counterfeits and unfit banknotes? recycling. The banknote recycling framework establishes the conditions under which euro banknotes can be recycled by credit institutions and other professional cash handlers, as well as the procedures for such recycling.

It requires credit institutions to check the euro banknotes to be dispensed via their ATMs using banknote-handling machines successfully tested by Eurosystem NCBs. Moreover, it lays down special requirements for the operation of stand-alone, customeroperated "cash-recycling machines" that can accept, verify and dispense banknotes. Only cash-recycling machines which can reliably detect counterfeits and sort banknotes according to their quality should be used by banks and other professional cash handlers.

On its website, the ECB has published a list of those types of banknote-handling and cash-recycling machines which have qualified for banknote recycling.⁸ Prior to being admitted to the euro area market, each machine type has to pass a standardised test at an NCB showing that it can reliably detect and separate counterfeits and worn banknotes that are unfit for further circulation. The tests need to be repeated annually to ensure that each machine type is performing properly and can detect the most recent counterfeits found in circulation.

After a transitional period, all banks and other professional cash handlers in the euro area will need to either comply with the regulations for banknote recycling or, alternatively, use their NCBs for banknote deposits/ withdrawals.





⁸ www.ecb.europa.eu/bc/cashhand/recycling/tested/html/index.en.html

Counterfeits

Euro banknotes can be used for international payments. This makes them attractive for counterfeiters. Still, the probability of encountering a counterfeit is very low. In the first half of 2008 some 312,000 counterfeit euro banknotes were withdrawn from circulation. This is a very small proportion of the 11 billion or so banknotes currently in circulation.

Did you know that ...

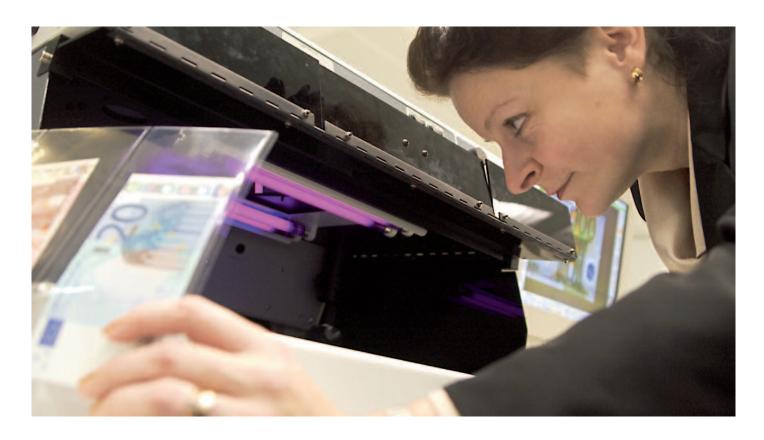
... the ECB works closely with Europol and Interpol to deter euro banknote counterfeiting?

... the ECB has established a Counterfeit Analysis Centre to categorise euro banknote counterfeits wherever they appear worldwide? Virtually all euro counterfeits can be easily distinguished from genuine euro banknotes by simply checking several security features; no special devices are needed. This method has proved effective, as counterfeiters concentrate on specific security features, but do not imitate all of these features.

Since the introduction of euro banknotes and coins, the ECB and the NCBs have been monitoring the counterfeit situation very closely. The ECB's Counterfeit Analysis Centre coordinates the work of the national analysis centres in the various EU Member States, which are either located at the NCBs or attached to national police forces. All analysis centres have access to a comprehensive technical, statistical and geographical database on counterfeits, the Counterfeit Monitoring

System. This system is located at the ECB and provides real-time information, such as information on the techniques used by counterfeiters to imitate security features. This knowledge is taken into account in the development of the next generation of euro banknotes. The first denomination of this second series is due to be introduced on I January 2011 and will be followed by the other denominations over a period of several years.

The ECB cooperates closely with the European Commission (which is responsible for providing information about counterfeit euro coins), as well as national police forces, Europol and Interpol, all of which compare data from the Counterfeit Monitoring System with their own crime record data in order to tackle crime.



Annex I - Institutional framework

The European Central Bank (ECB) is the organisation responsible for the conduct of monetary policy and the performance of other central banking functions for the euro. It carries out these tasks together with the national central banks (NCBs) of those EU Member States – 16 as of 1 January 2009 – having adopted the euro. Collectively, the ECB and those NCBs are known as the "Eurosystem". The ECB lies at the heart of the Eurosystem and the European System of Central Banks (ESCB).

The chapter of the EC Treaty (the Treaty establishing the European Community) concerned with Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) deals with the coordination of the economic policies of the 27 Member States of the EU and with the monetary policy of those Member States that have adopted the euro and thus make up the "euro area". The EC Treaty entrusts the performance of the central banking functions for the euro to the ESCB as a whole.

The ESCB comprises the ECB and the national central banks of all 27 Member States. The ESCB Statute, which is annexed to the EC Treaty as a protocol and forms an integral part of it, defines more specifically the relative roles and functions of the ECB and the national central banks.

The ESCB includes the national central banks of those EU Member States that have not yet adopted the euro, whether as a result of their special statutes (in the case of Denmark and the United Kingdom) or because they have a derogation in so far as they do not fulfil the criteria for adoption of the euro. Of course, these national central banks are not involved in the core activities of EMU, such as the conduct of monetary

policy for the euro area. The core central banking functions for the euro area are thus performed within the ESCB by the Eurosystem. Neither the ESCB nor the Eurosystem has legal personality. The Eurosystem is governed by the decision-making bodies of the ECB, namely the Governing Council and the Executive Board.

What distinguishes the euro and the ECB from a national currency and a national central bank is their supranational status. Unlike comparable central banks, such as the US Federal Reserve System or the Bank of Japan, which are the monetary authorities of their respective countries, the ECB is an authority determining monetary policy for the euro area, which as of I January 2009 will consist of 16 independent Member States.

The EC Treaty also provides for secondary Community legislation on EMU matters with a view to dealing with all of those aspects of EMU that are not governed in an exhaustive manner by the EC Treaty, for example matters relating to the issuing of euro banknotes and coins.

The following legal acts of the Council of the European Union and of the ECB (which is itself invested with regulatory powers under the EC Treaty and the ESCB Statute) form the core of the Community law governing the single currency:

- Council Regulation (EC) No 1103/97 of 17 June 1997 on certain provisions relating to the introduction of the euro, as amended by Council Regulation (EC) No 2595/2000 of 27 November 2000;
- Council Regulation (EC) No 974/98 of 3 May 1998 on the introduction of the euro, as amended by Council

Regulation (EC) No 2596/2000 of 27 November 2000, Council Regulation (EC) No 2169/2005 of 21 December 2005, Council Regulation (EC) No 1647/2006 of 7 November 2006, Council Regulation (EC) No 835/2007 of 10 July 2007, Council Regulation (EC) No 836/2007 of 10 July 2007 and Council Regulation (EC) No 693/2008 of 8 July 2008;

- Council Regulation (EC) No 2866/98 of 31 December 1998 on the conversion rates between the euro and the currencies of the Member States adopting the euro, as amended by Council Regulation (EC) No 1478/2000 of 19 June 2000, Council Regulation (EC) No 1086/2006 of 11 July 2006, Council Regulation (EC) No 1134/2007 of 10 July 2007, Council Regulation (EC) No 1135/2007 of 10 July 2007 and Council Regulation (EC) No 694/2008 of 8 July 2008;
- Council Regulation (EC) No 1338/2001 of 28 June 2001 laying down measures necessary for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting, the provisions of which were extended to the Member States not participating in the euro area by Council Regulation (EC) No 1339/2001 of the same date;
- ECB Decision of 20 March 2003 on the denominations, specifications, reproduction, exchange and withdrawal of euro banknotes (ECB/2003/4);
- ECB Decision of 6 December 2001 on the issue of euro banknotes (ECB/2001/15), as amended by ECB Decision ECB/2003/23 of 18 December 2003, ECB Decision ECB/2004/9 of 22 April 2004 and ECB Decision ECB/2006/25 of 15 December 2006;
- ECB Decision of 8 November 2001 on certain conditions regarding access to the Counterfeit Monitoring System (CMS) (ECB/2001/11).

Annex 2 – Photo pool



Annex 2 – Photo pool





