

THE EURO BANKNOTES

DESIGN

The euro banknotes have been in circulation since 1 January 2002. There are seven denominations, each with a different size: €5, €10, €20, €50, €100, €200 and €500.

The euro banknotes depict the architectural styles of seven periods in Europe's cultural history – classical, Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, baroque and rococo, the age of iron and glass architecture, and modern 20th century architecture – and show three main architectural elements: windows, doorways and bridges. None of the designs depict actual buildings or monuments. There are no individual national designs on the banknotes.

The windows and doorways on the front of each banknote symbolise the spirit of openness and cooperation in Europe. The reverse of each banknote features a bridge typical of the respective age of European cultural development. These images are a metaphor for communication among the people of Europe, as well as between Europe and the rest of the world.

The euro banknotes are produced at printing works throughout the EU. Strict quality controls ensure that all banknotes

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BANKNOTES AND COINS



produced are identical in quality and appearance. At the end of 2006, some 11.3 billion euro banknotes worth €628 billion were in circulation.

SECURITY FEATURES

Euro banknotes are produced using sophisticated printing technology and a number of high-tech security features have been incorporated into them. These features make the banknotes easy to recognise and difficult to counterfeit.

It is recommended to always check several security features:

FEEL

the banknote paper. It should be crisp and firm. Run your finger across the front of the banknote and you will feel that the ink is thicker in some parts.

LOOK

at the banknote and hold it against the light: the watermark, the security thread and the see-through number will then be visible. All three features can be seen from the front and the reverse side of genuine banknotes.

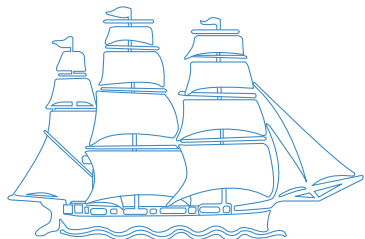
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the banknote: on the front, you can see the shifting image in the hologram. On the reverse side, you can see the glossy stripe (on the €5, €10 and €20 banknotes) or the colourchanging number (on the €50, €100, €200 and €500 banknotes).

Special design features have also been included to help blind and partially sighted people to recognise the different denominations.

For more details on the euro banknotes including an animation of the security features, see <http://www.ecb.int/bc/banknotes>

THE EURO COINS



One euro is divided into 100 cent. There are eight euro coins: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 50 cent, €1 and €2. Each one has a “European” side and a “national” side. The European sides show either the EU before its enlargement in May 2004 or a geographical image of Europe. The national sides vary from country to country. Despite these differences, you can use any euro coin anywhere in the euro area.

The eight euro coins vary in size, weight, material, colour and thickness. Some additional innovative features have also been included to help users, particularly blind and partially sighted people, to recognise the different denominations. For instance, each consecutive coin in the series has a different edge. The coins are produced at mints throughout the EU according to harmonised technical specifications. A detailed quality management system ensures that all euro coins are interchangeable throughout the euro area and conform to the standards necessary for their use in vending machines. At the end of 2006, some 69 billion euro coins worth €18 billion were in circulation.

The three independent states of Monaco, San Marino and the Vatican City use euro banknotes and coins. Special

agreements with France and Italy, both acting on behalf of the EU, have made it possible for these countries to mint and issue their own euro coins in line with the common specifications.

COMMEMORATIVE COINS

Each country in the euro area can issue a €2 commemorative coin once a year. These coins, which are issued at face value, have the same features and properties and the same European side as €2 circulation coins. What makes them different is their commemorative design on the national side.

Only the €2 denomination can be used for commemorative coins. They are legal tender throughout the euro area, which means they can be used – and must be accepted – just like any other euro coin.

COLLECTOR COINS

Unlike commemorative coins, collector coins are only legal tender in the country of issue and the selling price is equal to or above face value.

Collector coins have different features and properties: compared to legal tender coins, they must be of different



colour, diameter and weight and their denominations have to be different from coins intended for circulation. The designs used should also be at least slightly different from those of the national sides of circulation coins.

For pictures and details of all euro coins, see <http://www.ecb.int/bc/coins>

