

Issuance of euro coins

2011/0131(COD) - 25/05/2011 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to introduce binding rules for the issuance of euro coins.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

BACKGROUND: the Council conclusions of 23 November 1998 and of 5 November 2002 on euro coins intended for collection, the Commission Recommendation 2009/23/EC on common guidelines for the national sides and the issuance of euro coins intended for circulation, and the Commission Recommendation 2010/191/EU on the scope and effects of legal tender of euro banknotes and coins, provide for recommended practices regarding euro collector coins, the issuance of euro coins intended for circulation, including commemorative circulation coins, and consultation prior to the destruction of fit euro circulation coins.

The lack of mandatory provisions for issuance of euro coins may result in different practices among Member States and does not achieve a sufficiently integrated framework for the single currency. In the interest of legal transparency and certainty, it is therefore necessary to introduce binding rules for the issuance of euro coins.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT: no impact assessment was carried out.

LEGAL BASIS: Article 133 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

CONTENT: this proposed Regulation lays down rules on the issuance of euro circulation coins, including commemorative circulation coins, on the issuance of euro collector coins, and on consultation prior to the destruction of fit euro circulation coins.

The main elements of the proposal are as follows:

- Apart from regular euro circulation coins, Member States may also issue commemorative euro circulation coins to celebrate specific subjects, subject to limits set per year and issuing Member State for the number of issues of such coins. The proposal establishes certain volume limits for commemorative circulation coins in order to ensure that such coins remain a minor percentage of the total number of the 2-euro coins in circulation. At the same time, these volume limits should allow for the issuance of a sufficient volume of coins to ensure that commemorative coins can circulate effectively.
- Member States should also be able to issue euro collector coins, which are not intended for circulation and which should be readily distinguishable from euro circulation coins. Euro collector coins should have legal tender status only in the Member State of issuance and should not be issued with a view to their entry into circulation.
- In order to ensure that euro collector coins are not confused with euro circulation coins they should be readily distinguishable from the latter. It is furthermore appropriate that issuances of euro collector coins are accounted for in the volume of coins to be approved by the European Central Bank (ECB), but on an aggregate basis rather than for each individual issue.
- It is appropriate and in line with common practice among participating Member States that euro circulation coins, including commemorative circulation coins, should be put into circulation at face value, although a minor proportion may be sold at a higher price if produced with a special quality or presented in special packaging.

- In order to avoid that fit euro circulation coins are destroyed by one Member State while there may be a need of such coins in another, Member States should consult each other prior to the destruction of such coins.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS: the proposal has no implication for the Union budget.