Legal tender of euro banknotes and coins

2023/0208(COD) - 26/06/2026 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs adopted the report by Fernando NAVARRETE ROJAS (EPP, ES) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the legal tender of euro banknotes and coins.

The committee responsible recommended that the European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the proposal as follows:

Subject matter

This proposed regulation will apply to Member States **whose currency is the euro**. It establishes detailed rules on the scope and effects of the legal tender of, and access to, euro banknotes and coins, in order to ensure its effective use as a single currency.

Exceptions to the principle of mandatory acceptance of euro banknotes and coins

In accordance with the mandatory acceptance of cash, the payee should not refuse euro banknotes and/or coins tendered in payment to comply with that obligation. **By way of derogation**, a payee should be entitled to refuse euro banknotes and coins in any of the following cases:

- where a refusal is made in good faith and where such refusal is based on legitimate grounds in line with the principle of proportionality in view of concrete circumstances beyond the control of the payee;

- where, prior to the payment, the payee has agreed with the payer on a different means of payment, without prejudice to Article 5a;

- where the goods or services are provided to the payer at an unmanned point of sale, in view of the mechanical and security constraints inherent in such points of sale, taking into account the need to have access to essential services.

The **burden of proof** regarding the existence of such legitimate grounds in a given case and the proportionality of the refusal of euro banknotes and coins will lie with the beneficiary.

Legitimate reasons may include situations in which, before payment, the beneficiary notices that the characteristics of the banknotes or coins presented by the payer do not comply with Council Regulation (EC) No 1338/2001 laying down measures necessary for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting or are not fit for circulation.

Prohibition of ex ante unilateral exclusions of payments in cash

Any contractual terms relied on by payees subject to the obligation to accept euro banknotes and coins, which have the object or effect of excluding the use of euro banknotes and coins by payers of monetary debts denominated in euro, shall be negotiated individually. The payees should **not engage in commercial practices (e.g. ‘no cash’ signs)** that have the object or effect of excluding the use of euro banknotes and coins by payers of monetary debts denominated in euro.

Contractual terms and commercial practices prohibited under the Regulation shall not be binding on the payer.

Access to cash

Member States should ensure **effective access to cash throughout their territory**, in all their different regions, including the outermost regions, in both urban and non-urban, in particular sparsely populated, areas, paying particular attention to the needs of vulnerable groups, such as older persons, persons with disabilities, people with low income or low digital skills and unbanked persons.

In order to ensure effective access to species, Member States should monitor access to species throughout their territory on the basis of established common indicators and assess the situation continuously.

In carrying out the monitoring and assessment, Member States may be guided, *inter alia*, by the availability and accessibility of cash services, including the presence of ATMs and overthecounter services, cash-back agreements and mobile offices, with special attention to their geographical distribution, opening hours, affordability and compliance with accessibility requirements.

Member States may take adequate measures to **raise public awareness** about the right and benefits, such as security or resilience, of using cash as legal tender and the available means to access cash services, with a focus on **persons with disabilities**, functional limitations or limited digital skills, and the elderly.

Resilience of cash

Member States should ensure that a cash **resilience plan** is established in order to ensure effective access to cash in situations where there is widespread and severe disruption of the continuity of digital means of payments or a credible and imminent risk of such disruption that affects or threatens to affect, in whole or in part, a Member State or the euro area.