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COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 975/98

of 3 May 1998

on denominations and technical specifications of euro coins intended for circulation

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COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 975/98

of 3 May 1998

on denominations and technical specifications of euro coins intended for circulation

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 105a(2) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission ⁽¹⁾,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Monetary Institute ⁽²⁾,

Acting in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 189c of the Treaty ⁽³⁾,

- (1) Whereas, at the meeting of the European Council in Madrid on 15 and 16 December 1995, the scenario for the changeover to the single currency was adopted which provides for introduction of euro coins by 1 January 2002 at the latest; whereas the precise date for the issue of euro coins will be decided when the Council adopts its regulation on the introduction of the euro immediately after the decision on the Member States adopting the euro as the single currency has been taken as early as possible in 1998;
- (2) Whereas, according to Article 105a(2) of the Treaty, Member States may issue coins subject to approval by the European Central Bank (ECB) of the volume of the issue and the Council may, acting in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 189c and after consulting the ECB, adopt measures to harmonise the denominations and technical specifications of all coins intended for circulation to the extent necessary to permit their smooth circulation within the Community;
- (3) Whereas the European Monetary Institute has indicated that euro banknotes will range from EUR 5 to EUR 500; whereas the denominations of banknotes and coins will need to allow for cash payments of amounts expressed in euro and cent to be made easily;
- (4) Whereas the mint directors of the Community received a mandate from the Council to study and elaborate a report for a European single coinage system; whereas they submitted a report in November 1996 followed by a revised report in February 1997 indicating the denominations and technical specifications (diameter, thickness, weight, colour, composition and edge) of the new euro coins;

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 208, 9.7.1997, p. 5 and OJ C 386, 20.12.1997, p. 12.

⁽²⁾ Opinion delivered on 25 June 1997 (OJ C 205, 5.7.1997, p. 18).

⁽³⁾ Opinion of the European Parliament of 6 November 1997 (OJ C 358, 24.11.1997, p. 24), Council common position of 20 November 1997 (OJ C 23, 23.1.1998, p. 1) and Decision of the European Parliament of 17 December 1997 (OJ C 14, 19.1.1998).

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- (5) Whereas the new European single coinage system should induce public confidence and entail technological innovations that would establish it as a secure, reliable and efficient system;

- (6) Whereas the acceptance of the new system by the public is one of the main objectives of the Community coinage system; whereas public confidence in the new system would depend on the physical characteristics of the euro coins, which should be as user-friendly as possible;

- (7) Whereas consultations with consumer associations, the European Blind Union and representatives of the vending machines industry have been carried out to take into account the specific requirements of important categories of coin users; whereas, in order to ensure a smooth changeover to the euro and to facilitate acceptance of the new coinage systems by users, easy distinction between coins through visual and tactile characteristics will need to be guaranteed;

- (8) Whereas the new euro coins will be more readily distinguishable and easier to become accustomed to if there is a link between their diameter and face value;

- (9) Whereas certain special security features are needed in order to reduce the scope for fraud for the 1 and 2 euro given their high value; whereas the use of a technique whereby coins are made in three layers and the combination of two different colours in the coin are considered to be the most efficient security features available today;

- (10) Whereas giving the coins one European and one national side is an appropriate expression of the idea of European Monetary union between Member States and could significantly increase the degree of acceptance of the coins by European citizens;

- (11) Whereas on 30 June 1994 the European Parliament and the Council adopted Directive 94/27/EC ⁽¹⁾, which limited the use of nickel in certain products in recognition that nickel could be cause of allergies under certain conditions; whereas coins are not covered by that Directive; whereas, nevertheless, some Member States already use a nickel-free alloy called Nordic Gold in their current coinage system for reasons of public health; whereas it seems desirable to reduce the nickel content of coins when moving to a new coinage system;

- (12) Whereas it is therefore appropriate to follow in principle the proposal of the aforesaid mint directors and to adapt it only to the extent necessary to take into account in particular the specific requirements of important categories of coin users and the need to reduce the use of nickel in coins;

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 188, 22.7.1994, p. 1.

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- (13) Whereas of all prescribed technical specifications for euro coins, only the value for thickness is of an indicative nature, since actual thickness of a coin depends on prescribed diameter and weight,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

The first series of euro coins will include eight denominations in the range from 1 cent to 2 euro with the following technical specifications:

Face value (euro)	Diameter in mm	Thickness in mm ⁽¹⁾	Weight in gr	Shape	Colour	Composition	Edge
2	25,75	1,95	8,5	Round	External part: white Internal part: yellow	Copper-nickel (Cu75Ni25) Three-layers: nickel-brass/nickel/nickel-brass CuZn20Ni5/Ni 2/ CuZn20Ni5	Edge lettering Fine milled
1	23,25	2,125	7,5	Round	External part: yellow Internal part: white	Nickel-brass (CuZn20Ni5) Three-layers: Cu75Ni25/Ni7/ Cu75Ni25	Interrupted milled
0,50	24,25	► M1 1,88 ◀	► M1 7,8 ◀	Round	Yellow	Nordic Gold Cu89A15Zn5Sn1	► M1 shaped edge with fine scallops ◀
0,20	22,25	1,63	5,7	‘Spanish flower’ shape	Yellow	Nordic Gold Cu89A15Zn5Sn1	Plain
0,10	19,75	1,51	4,1	Round	Yellow	Nordic Gold Cu89A15Zn5Sn1	► M1 shaped edge with fine scallops ◀
0,05	21,25	1,36	3,9	Round	Red	Copper-covered steel	Smooth
0,02	18,75	1,36	3	Round	Red	Copper-covered steel	Smooth with a groove
0,01	16,25	1,36	2,3	Round	Red	Copper-covered steel	Smooth

⁽¹⁾ The values relating to thickness are of an indicative nature.

▼M2

Article 1a

For the purposes of this Regulation, the following definitions shall apply:

1. ‘circulation coins’ means euro coins intended for circulation, the denominations and technical specifications of which are laid down in Article 1;
2. ‘regular coins’ means circulation coins excluding commemorative coins;
3. ‘commemorative coins’ means circulation coins, which are intended to commemorate a specific subject as specified in Article 1h.

▼M2*Article 1b*

Circulation coins shall have a common European side and a distinctive national side.

Article 1c

1. The national side of circulation coins shall not repeat any indication of the denomination, or any parts thereof, of the coin. It shall not repeat the name of the single currency or of its subdivision, unless such indication stems from the use of a different alphabet.

2. By derogation from paragraph 1, the edge lettering of the 2-euro coin may include an indication of the denomination, provided that only the figure '2' or the term 'euro' in the relevant alphabet, or both, are used.

Article 1d

The national side of all denominations of circulation coins shall bear an indication of the issuing Member State by means of the Member State's name or an abbreviation of it.

Article 1e

1. The national side of circulation coins shall bear a circle of 12 stars that shall fully surround the national design, including the year mark and the indication of the issuing Member State's name. This shall not prevent some design elements from extending into the circle of stars, provided that the stars are all clearly and fully visible. The 12 stars shall be depicted as on the Union flag.

2. The designs for the national side of circulation coins shall be chosen taking into account that euro coins circulate in all Member States whose currency is the euro.

Article 1f

1. Changes to the designs used for the national sides of regular coins may only be made once every 15 years, without prejudice to changes necessary to prevent counterfeiting of the currency.

2. Without prejudice to paragraph 1, changes to the designs used for the national sides of regular coins may be made where the Head of State referred to on a coin changes. However, a temporary vacancy or the provisional occupation of the function of Head of State shall not give any additional right to such change.

▼C1*Article 1g*

Issuing Member States shall update their national sides of regular coins in order to fully comply with this Regulation by 20 July 2062.

▼ **M2***Article 1h*

1. Commemorative coins shall bear a different national design from that of the regular coins and shall only commemorate subjects of major national or European relevance. Commemorative coins issued collectively by all Member States whose currency is the euro shall only commemorate subjects of the highest European relevance and their design shall be without prejudice to the possible constitutional requirements of these Member States.
2. The edge lettering on commemorative coins shall be the same as on regular coins.
3. Commemorative coins may only have a face value of 2 euro.

Article 1i

1. Member States shall inform each other of the draft designs of new national sides of circulation coins, including the edge letterings, and, for commemorative coins, on the estimated volume of issuance, before the formal approval of those designs.

2. The power to approve designs for new or modified national sides of circulation coins shall be conferred on the Council acting by qualified majority in accordance with the procedure set out in paragraphs 3 to 7.

When taking the decisions referred to in this Article, the voting rights of the Member States whose currency is not the euro shall be suspended.

3. For the purpose of paragraph 1, draft designs of circulation coins shall be submitted by the issuing Member State to the Council, to the Commission and to the other Member States whose currency is the euro, in principle at least three months before the planned issue date.

4. Within seven days following the submission referred to in paragraph 3, any Member State whose currency is the euro may, in a reasoned opinion addressed to the Council and to the Commission, raise an objection to the draft design proposed by the issuing Member State if that draft design is likely to create adverse reactions among its citizens.

5. Where the Commission considers that the draft design does not respect the technical requirements set out by this Regulation, it shall, within seven days following the submission referred to in paragraph 3, submit a negative assessment to the Council.

6. If no reasoned opinion or negative assessment has been submitted to the Council within the time limit referred to in paragraphs 4 and 5 respectively, the decision approving the design is deemed to be adopted by the Council on the day following the expiry of the time limit referred to in paragraph 5.

7. In all other cases, the Council shall decide without delay on the approval of the draft design, unless, within seven days following the submission of a reasoned opinion or of a negative assessment, the issuing Member State withdraws its submission and informs the Council of its intention to submit a new draft design.

▼M2

8. All relevant information on new national circulation coin designs shall be published by the Commission in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

▼C1*Article 1j*

Articles 1c, 1d and 1e and Article 1h(2):

- (a) shall not apply to circulation coins which have been issued or produced prior to 19 July 2012;
- (b) shall, during a transitional period ending on 20 July 2062, not apply to the designs that are already legally in use on circulation coins on 19 July 2012. Circulation coins that have been issued or produced during the transitional period may remain legal tender without limit in time.

▼B*Article 2*

This Regulation shall enter into force on 1 January 1999.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States, in accordance with the Treaty, subject to Article 109k(1) and Protocols 11 and 12.