

Press release

21 February 2025

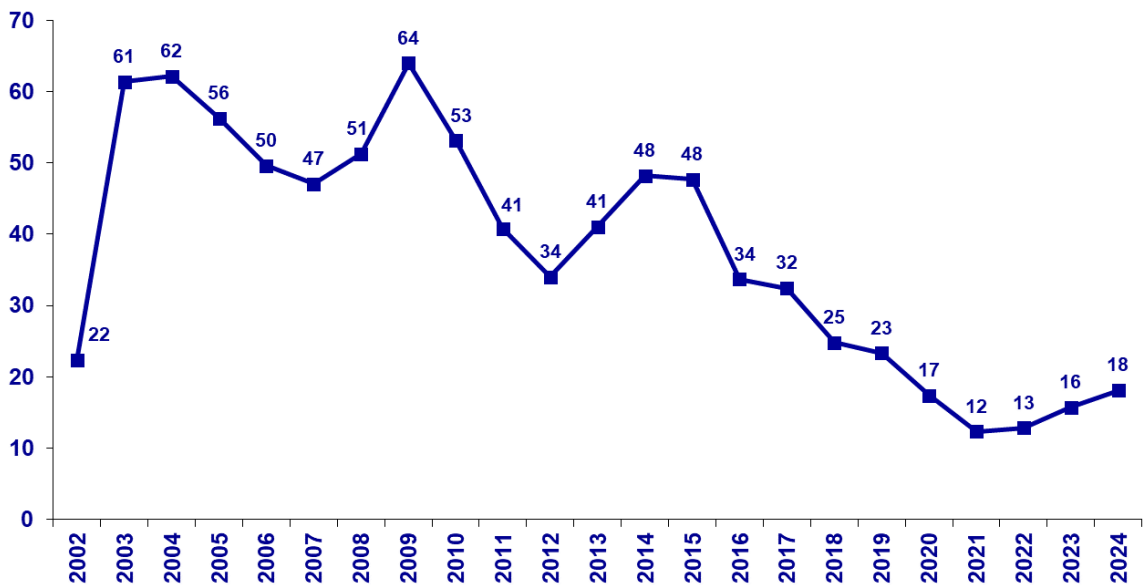
Number of counterfeit euro banknotes continues to be low in 2024

- 554,000 counterfeit euro banknotes withdrawn in 2024 representing, by historical standards, small proportion of total banknotes in circulation
- €20 and €50 most counterfeited denominations, accounting for over 75% of all counterfeit notes withdrawn
- Euro banknotes remain safe and trusted means of payment
- Authenticity of euro banknotes can be verified using “feel, look and tilt” method

Some 554,000 counterfeit euro banknotes were withdrawn from circulation in 2024. The likelihood of receiving a counterfeit is low, as the number of counterfeits is very small in proportion to genuine euro [banknotes in circulation](#). In 2024, 18 counterfeits were detected per million genuine banknotes in circulation, which is very low compared with the levels observed following the launch of the euro (see chart).

Chart

Number of counterfeit euro banknotes detected annually per million genuine notes in circulation



Although the proportion is very small, the actual number of counterfeits has increased compared with the past few years, when the number of counterfeits was exceptionally low following the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, the number of counterfeits remains lower than in the years leading up to the pandemic.

€20 and €50 denominations continued to be the most commonly counterfeited, together accounting for more than 75% of the total (see table). 97.8% of the counterfeits were found in euro area countries, while 1.3% were found in non-euro area EU Member States and 0.9% in other parts of the world.

Table

Breakdown of counterfeits by denomination in 2024

Denomination	€5	€10	€20	€50	€100	€200	€500
Percentage of total	1.3	6.8	36.0	43.6	7.9	3.8	0.6

The public does not need to be concerned about counterfeiting but should remain vigilant. Most counterfeits are easy to detect, as they have either no security features or only very poor imitations of

the existing features. Notes can be checked using the simple “feel, look and tilt” method described on our dedicated [security features](#) web page or on the websites of the euro area national central banks. The Eurosystem also helps professional cash handlers by ensuring that successfully tested machines for handling and processing banknotes can reliably identify counterfeits and withdraw them from circulation.

If you receive a suspicious banknote, compare it side by side with one you know to be genuine. If your suspicions are confirmed, please contact the police or – depending on national practice – your national central bank or your own retail or commercial bank. The Eurosystem actively supports law enforcement agencies in the fight against currency counterfeiting.

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