

Lowest Level of Counterfeit Euro Banknotes since 2015

Thomas Wahl

News

On 27 July 2018, the European Central Bank (ECB) published its [half-yearly statistics on euro banknote counterfeiting](#). 301,000 counterfeit euro banknotes were withdrawn from circulation in the first half of 2018. This is the lowest number of withdrawn counterfeit euro banknotes since 2015. During the first half of 2017, 363,000 counterfeit banknotes were detected; in the second half of 2017, they totaled 331,000.

The majority of counterfeit banknotes are still the €20 and €50 notes. Their denomination represent around 83% of all counterfeit notes.

Most counterfeits (88.8%) were found in countries in the euro area. Around 10.3% were found in EU Member States outside the euro area. Only a small percentage (0.9%) was detected in other parts of the world.

The ECB stressed that the number of counterfeit euro banknotes remains low in relation to the number of genuine banknotes in circulation (currently over 21 billion, with a total value of more than €1.1 trillion). The likelihood of receiving a counterfeit euro banknote is therefore very low.

Notwithstanding, the ECB directs its ongoing efforts to improving banknote security and technology.

Everyone can verify Euro banknotes simply by using the “[feel, look, and tilt](#)” method described on the ECB website.

The ECB website also provides information on [what to do if a banknote is suspected of being fake](#); it also includes special information for cash handlers.

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ISSN: 1862-6947
<https://eucrim.eu>



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The project is co-financed by the [Union Anti-Fraud Programme \(UAFP\)](#), managed by the [European Anti-Fraud Office \(OLAF\)](#).



**Co-funded by
the European Union**