

**Question for written answer E-009473/2013
to the Commission**
Rule 117
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Subject: Problems arising from the introduction of new banknotes

The new EUR 5 banknote which entered circulation on 2 May 2013 includes new security features intended to make it less prone to forgery. Although efforts do of course need to be made to combat forgery, the new EUR 5 note has caused a certain amount of inconvenience, particularly in view of the fact that it is the smallest denomination and, therefore, is the most widely used in small day-to-day transactions. Businesses using machines containing banknote readers, such as automated pumps at petrol stations, cigarette machines and public transport ticket machines, have encountered problems. The changes to the banknote's design make it necessary for retailers to update the vending machine software and, owing to supply-side constraints and the fact that there are a limited number of specialists working in this field, this can end up costing businesses hundreds of euros. In view of the current economic situation, many retailers, in particular in Italy, have decided not to upgrade their equipment, choosing instead to defer the necessary expenditure on the grounds that the old EUR 5 banknote has not yet been withdrawn and still makes up a very large proportion of the total number in circulation.

Although the fight against counterfeiting needs to be continued, with appropriate measures being taken towards this end, can the Commission say how many forged banknotes were recovered in each Member State in 2011 and 2012 and whether these figures warrant the replacement of all of the banknotes in circulation?