

**Question for written answer E-002507/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Christine Anderson (ID), Gunnar Beck (ID)

Subject: Use of the coronavirus pandemic as a pretext for restricting cash payments

Measures aimed at curbing the pandemic have already resulted in a significant loss of turnover for the stationary retail sector. A not insignificant part of its turnover has switched to e-commerce, possibly even on a permanent basis.

Many businesses currently prefer card payments over cash payments on the grounds that this reduces the risk of infection. At the European Parliament in Brussels, for example, it is no longer possible to pay for anything by cash.

A professor of molecular immunology at London Metropolitan University says: 'There are no scientific studies demonstrating the coronavirus on cash, nor if it can be transmitted in that way.'¹

A WHO scientist has made it clear that 'the virus will not survive for very long on surfaces, particularly on a dry surface like a banknote.'²

On the other hand, research has shown that some ATMs carry significantly more germs than a public toilet at a railway station.³

1. What efforts will the Commission make to boost confidence in the unconditional use of euro banknotes, including during a pandemic, particularly with reference to the fourth indent of Article 127(2) TFEU?
2. As part of its measures to combat disinformation⁴, will the Commission take action against deliberately fabricated information suggesting that using a card reader exposes people to fewer germs?
3. How strong is the Commission's commitment to defending the unrestricted use of euro banknotes?

¹ <https://www.centralbanking.com/central-banks/currency/7509046/will-cash-survive-covid-19>

² <https://www.centralbanking.com/central-banks/currency/7509046/will-cash-survive-covid-19>

³ <https://lendedu.com/blog/bank-atm-cleanliness-study/>

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/germany/news/20181205-aktionsplan-gegen-desinformation_de