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PRESS RELEASE

EUROSYSTEM TO INTRODUCE SECOND SERIES OF EURO BANKNOTES – THE “EUROPA” SERIES

The European Central Bank (ECB) and the national central banks (NCBs) of the Eurosystem are to introduce a second series of euro banknotes. Called the “Europa” series, it will include a portrait of Europa – a figure from Greek mythology and the origin of the name of our continent – in the watermark and the hologram. The new banknotes will be introduced gradually over several years, starting with the €5 banknote in May 2013.

The Europa series has benefited from advances in banknote technology since the first series was introduced over ten years ago. Its security features have been enhanced, which will help to make the banknotes even more secure. Three new features – the portrait watermark, portrait hologram and emerald number – have been unveiled today.

The new banknotes are an evolution. Like the first series, they will have the “ages and styles” design and the same dominant colours, but they have been modified to accommodate the enhanced security features. They will be easy to distinguish from the first series. The Europa series will have the same denominations as its predecessor, i.e. €5, €10, €20, €50, €100, €200 and €500, and they will be introduced in ascending order. Thus, the new €10 banknote will follow the €5.

The first series will initially circulate alongside the new banknotes, but will gradually be withdrawn and eventually cease to be legal tender. The date when this occurs will be announced well in advance. However, the banknotes of the first series will retain their value indefinitely and can be exchanged at the Eurosystem NCBs at any time.

The Europa series €5 banknote will be unveiled in full on 10 January 2013 and credit institutions will start to issue the new notes over the counter or via cash dispensers in May next year.

In order to raise public awareness of the Europa series, the ECB and the NCBs of the Eurosystem will be conducting a multi-channel information campaign across the euro area in 2013. Preparations are currently under way, supported by two agencies chosen by the ECB following a public tender.

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