



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 29.07.1998  
COM(1998) 492 final

98/0270 (SYN)

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL,  
THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK

on denominations and technical specifications of euro coins  
intended for circulation

**Proposal for a  
COUNCIL REGULATION (EC)**

amending Regulation (EC) No 975/98 on denominations and technical specifications  
of euro coins intended for circulation

(presented by the Commission)

## EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

### 1. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

On 3 May 1998 the Council adopted Regulation (EC) No 975/98 on denominations and technical specifications of euro coins intended for circulation. The aim of such Regulation was to define harmonised denominations and technical specifications for the first series of euro coins to permit their smooth circulation within the Community in accordance with Article 105a(2) of the Treaty.

The technical specifications provided for in Regulation (EC) No 975/98 were defined following intensive consultation of the main user groups, in particular consumer associations, the European Blind Union and the vending machine industry.

Since its adoption, Regulation (EC) No 975/98 has been complemented by more detailed technical specifications developed by the mint directors on the basis of the Regulation and necessary for production. Having examined such detailed specifications and having tested samples issued from the first production runs, the European Vending Association and the European Blind Union have asked for some specific aspects of the technical specifications of the 50 cent and the 10 cent coins to be modified.

In particular the vending industry has asked for a greater differentiation between the 50 cent and the 20 cent coins in order to avoid risks of fraud resulting from the use of manipulated 20 cent coins in place of 50 cent coins; such further differentiation would be obtained by increasing the weight of the 50 cent coin from 7 g to 7.8 g.

The European Blind Union has complained about the edge of the 50 cent and 10 cent coins. Indeed, the samples issued from the first production runs did not match the samples which were agreed by the European Blind Union during the consultation process preceding the adoption of Regulation (EC) No 975/98. In order to come back to the edge previously agreed by the European Blind Union and avoid any risk of misinterpretation in the future, the definition of the edge of the 50 cent and 10 cent coins should be modified from "coarse milling" into "shaped edge with fine scallops".

#### **Principal objective of the proposal**

The objective of the proposed Council Regulation is to amend Regulation (EC) No 975/98 to the extent necessary to give satisfaction to the abovementioned specific requirements recently expressed by the vending industry and the European Blind Union.

This proposal for a Council Regulation is therefore exclusively aimed at amending the weight of the 50 cent coin and the definition of the edge of the 50 cent and 10 cent coins.

The other features of Regulation (EC) No 975/98 remain unchanged and are outside the scope of this proposal.

The limitation of the scope of this proposal is essential to allow the production of coins other than 50 cents and 10 cents to start in a timely manner, and not compromise the introduction of the euro coins on 1 January 2002.

## **2. COMMENTS ON THE ARTICLES**

### **Article 1**

This Article provides for the modifications of the technical specifications of the 50 cent and 10 cent coins contained in Article 1 of Regulation (EC) No 975/98.

These modifications reflect the requirements expressed by the vending industry and the European Blind Union and have been accepted by them and welcomed by consumer associations.

### **Article 2**

This Article ensures that the Regulation shall enter into force as from the first day of the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union, i.e. as from 1 January 1999. This is also the date when Regulation (EC) No 975/98 shall enter into force and the first day when Article 105 a(2) is applicable.

The wording of the closing formula is the same as the one used in Regulation (EC) No 975/98.

**Proposal for a  
COUNCIL REGULATION (EC)**

amending Regulation (EC) No 975/98 on denominations and technical specifications  
of euro coins intended for circulation

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 105a(2) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission<sup>1</sup>,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Central Bank<sup>2</sup>,

Acting in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 189c of the Treaty, in cooperation with the European Parliament<sup>3</sup>,

- (1) Whereas Article 1 of Council Regulation (EC) No 975/98<sup>4</sup> sets out the technical specifications of the eight denominations included in the first series of euro coins; whereas the mint directors have drawn up, on the basis of that Regulation, the more detailed specifications necessary for production;
- (2) Whereas the vending industry, having examined those detailed specifications, has requested an increase of the weight of the 50 cent coin in order to ensure clearer differentiation of that coin and reduce risks of fraud; whereas the European Blind Union, having tested samples from the first production runs, has complained about the edge milling of the 50 cent and 10 cent coins which did not match the milling of the samples agreed by it during the consultation process preceding the adoption of Regulation (EC) No 975/98; whereas, in order to ensure the acceptance of the new system by the users, it seems desirable to accede to the requests expressed both by the vending industry and the European Blind Union; whereas in order to satisfy the vending industry's requirements, it is necessary to increase the weight of the 50 cent coin from 7 g to 7.8 g; whereas in order to satisfy the European Blind Union's requirements and avoid any risk of misinterpretation in the future, it is desirable to modify the specification for the edge of the 50 cent and 10 cent coins from "coarse milling" to "shaped edge with fine scallops" which better reflects the shape of the edge originally agreed by the European Blind Union for those two coins;
- (3) Whereas it is essential that the modifications of the technical specifications be confined to the weight of the 50 cent coin and the edge of the 10 cent and 50 cent coins in order not to compromise the production timetable and the introduction of the euro coins on 1 January 2002,

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4 OJ L 139, 11.5.1998, p. 6

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

*Article 1*

In Article 1 of Regulation (EC) No 975/98, the table is amended as follows:

- (1) The fourth row is amended as follows:
  - (a) In the third column, the figure "1.69" is replaced by "1.88";
  - (b) In the fourth column, the figure "7" is replaced by "7.8";
  - (c) In the eighth column, the words "coarse milled" are replaced by "shaped edge with fine scallops".
- (2) In the sixth row, eighth column, the words "coarse milled" are replaced by "shaped edge with fine scallops".

*Article 2*

This Regulation shall enter into force on 1 January 1999.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States, in accordance with the Treaty, subject to Article 109k(1) and Protocols 11 and 12.

Done at Brussels,

For the Council  
The President

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