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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT
Accompanying the document

**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE
COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**Fifteenth Report on the practical preparations for the future enlargement of the euro
area**

{COM(2014) 706 final}

1. INTRODUCTION

This Commission Staff Working Document accompanies the 'Fifteenth Report on the practical preparations for the enlargement of the euro area'. While the Report deals with the practical preparations in Lithuania which is envisaging the euro changeover on 1 January 2015, this Staff Working Document provides information on the state of practical preparations in the remaining Member States outside the euro area¹, focusing on any developments from October 2013 (state of play reflected in the last Staff Working Document²) until end of August 2014. As the previous Staff Working Documents published on this subject, it provides also an overview on how Member States respect the provisions of the 'Commission Recommendation of 10 January 2008 on measures to facilitate future changeovers to the euro (2008/78/EC)³. The Annex provides a synoptic overview of the overall state of play of national changeover preparations.

2. PREPARATIONS AT NATIONAL LEVEL

2.1. Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, practical preparations for the introduction of the euro have not been launched. A changeover target date has not been set.

2.2. Czech Republic

A target date for euro adoption has not been set. The Czech Government declared in February 2014 to actively support the creation of conditions conducive to the adoption of the euro. Progress on the practical preparations has last been assessed in April 2010.

The National Changeover Plan was approved in April 2007. The dedicated national euro changeover website (www.zavedenieura.cz) displays euro-related governmental documents and the documents produced by the National Coordination Group for Euro Adoption and its Working Groups.

2.3. Croatia

Croatia has not yet set a target date for euro adoption and the practical preparations have not yet been launched.

2.4. Hungary

Hungary has not set the target date for euro adoption. The National Changeover Plan was last updated in 2009. The national body responsible for changeover preparations is the National Euro Coordination Committee (NECC), which is composed of high level representatives of Ministries, central governmental institutions and the central bank of Hungary, Magyar Nemzeti Bank.

¹ For previous Staff Working Documents on this subject see http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/euro/adoption/preparing/index_en.htm.

² Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the document 'Thirteenth Report on the practical preparations for the enlargement of the euro area' – SWD(2013) 491 final, 3.12.2013.

³ Notified under document number C(2007) 6912 (OJ L 23, 26.1.2008, p. 30).

The section on communication in the National Changeover Plan defines basic principles, actors, messages and target groups for the communication on the euro.

2.5. Poland

A target date for the euro adoption has not been set. The National Euro Changeover Plan of 2011 is being revised, taking into account inter alia insights gained in a twinning program (2011-2012) with Austria, the Netherlands and Slovakia as well as the implications of the current reform agenda in the EMU on the Polish euro adoption strategy.

The organisational structure for the euro adoption comprises the National Coordination Committee for the Euro Changeover, the Coordinating Council, eight Working Committees and two Task Groups. The Committee and the Council are chaired by the Government Plenipotentiary for the Euro Adoption in Poland and co-chaired by the Plenipotentiary of the National Bank of Poland's (Narodowy Bank Polski) Management Board.

Information on activities of the bodies involved in the changeover preparations are published on the website of the Government Plenipotentiary for the Euro Adoption in Poland (www.euro.mf.gov.pl). The dedicated communication strategy will be published alongside the update of the National Euro Changeover Plan.

In cooperation with the European Commission, the National Bank of Poland has organised a travelling exhibition "The Euro – a currency for Europe", with stops in Polish regional capitals. The project started in 2012 and is set to end in December 2014.

2.6. Romania

In May 2014, the Romanian Government set 1 January 2019 as the target date for adopting the euro.

The national body responsible for changeover preparations is the Interministerial Committee for changeover to the euro. The Committee is composed of high level representative of Ministries and central governmental institutions. It is chaired by the Prime Minister and co-chaired by the Governor of the National Bank of Romania (NBR).

2.7. Sweden

Sweden does not have a target date for adopting the euro. The preparations were stalled by the negative outcome of the referendum of 14 September 2003.

3. PROTECTION OF THE EURO AGAINST COUNTERFEITING

Concerning the protection of the euro against counterfeiting, the Member States addressed in this Staff Working Document have established the national authorities as required by Article 2 of Regulation (EC) No 1338/2001; their representatives participate in the meetings of the expert groups and have received appropriate training.

4. RESPECTING THE PROVISIONS OF THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON MEASURES TO FACILITATE FUTURE CHANGEOVERS TO THE EURO

This section provides an overview on how the concerned Member States meet the provisions of the Commission Recommendation of 10 January 2008 on measures to facilitate future changeovers to the euro (2008/78/EC). It is based solely on publicly available information as at end of August 2014 and therefore may not reflect all preparations which are under way.

	BG	CZ	HR	HU	PL	RO	SE
Article 1: Steering and organisation							
Set up of appropriate national coordination structures		X		X	X	X	
National changeover plan:							
1. Prepared		X		X	X		
2. Discussed with economic operators				X			
3. Regularly updated		X		X	X		
Article 2: Facilitating preparation of citizens							
Dual display of prices should be imposed by the national law		X		X			
Compulsory dual display planned as from the irrevocable fixing of the exchange rate		X		X			
Min. 6 months and max. 1 year long compulsory dual display after €-day planned		X		X			
Any charges for accepting €-payments imposed by businesses before €-day should be displayed separately							
Legal ban on using a rate other than the official conversion rate		X		X			
Plans to inform citizens about security features of euro cash		X		X			
Special information programmes for vulnerable groups planned		X		X			
Training sessions for personnel working with cash/in direct contact with public envisaged:							
1. By public administration				X			
2. By businesses							
Plans for the provision of information to SMEs by:							
1. Public administration bodies				X			
2. Professional associations, chambers of commerce, business advisors		X					
Plans for the provision of information by credit institutions to their customers				X			
Plans to monitor progress in preparations by means of surveys		X		X			
Article 3: Ensuring a quick introduction of euro cash							

	BG	CZ	HR	HU	PL	RO	SE
Planned disboarding campaign aimed at citizens		X					
1. Frontloading 2. Sub-frontloading schedules put in place							
Euro coin kits for retailers							
Plans for financially attractive deferred debiting							
Mini coin kits for citizens: 1. Production envisaged 2. At least 1 kit per household							
ATMs should be adapted as of €-day		X					
Plans for temporary closure of ATMs that cannot be adapted for technical reasons							
Giving of change in € only as of €-day		X		X			
Plans for ad-hoc measures due to increased cash volume in sales outlets							
POS terminals should be switched to euro as of €-day		X		X			
Consumers will be encouraged to use electronic payment means							
Plans for extra opening days in credit institutions around €-day							
Plans for extended opening hours in credit institutions around €-day							
Article 4: Prevention of abusive practices and wrong perceptions on price evolutions							
Planned agreements on neutral impact of changeover on prices (e.g. Fair Pricing agreement)		X		X			
Planned logo to identify the subscribers of the Fair Pricing agreement				X			
Planned advertisement for the Fair Pricing agreement logo							
Close monitoring of compliance with commitments by subscribers planned				X			
Planned dissuasive measures for non-compliance with the Fair Pricing agreement							
Planned monitoring of prices from the adoption of conversion rate until the end of dual display				X			
Regular publication of information on evolution of prices around €-day							
Alignment of bank charges for							

	BG	CZ	HR	HU	PL	RO	SE
payments in € with those applicable to payments in national currency before €-day							

ANNEX

	Bulgaria	Czech Republic
Changeover organisation		
National target date for euro adoption	A target date has not been set.	A target date has not been set.
National co-ordinating institution		The National Co-ordination Group (NCG) has six Working Groups (WGs) in charge of different areas of practical preparations. A National Co-ordinator for Euro Adoption was appointed by the Government in 2007.
(Approved) National Changeover Plan	A Common Agreement on euro adoption between the Government and the Bulgarian National Bank (2004) provides for the broad framework and the main principles of euro introduction: http://www.bnb.bg/bnbweb/groups/public/documents/bnb_law/agreements_bnb-cm_en.pdf	The Czech Republic's Euro Accession Strategy (as updated in August 2007): http://www.cnb.cz/www.cnb.cz/en/monetary_policy/strategic_documents/download/eurostrategy_070829.pdf The National Changeover Plan of 11 April 2007: http://www.zavedenieura.cz/cps/rde/xbcr/euro/NP_EN_06-08-07.pdf The most recent Progress Report on the fulfillment of the National Changeover Plan of 19 April 2010: http://www.zavedenieura.cz/cps/rde/xchg/euro/xsl/dokumenty_vladni_material_779.html
Changeover details		
Type of scenario		"Big bang"
Dual circulation period		Two weeks starting from €-day
Exchange of national banknotes and coins		The Czech National Bank, commercial banks and other selected entities will exchange Czech korunas for the euro for at least six months after €-day. Subsequently, the legacy currency will only be exchanged at the Czech National Bank. The maximum length of the banknote exchange period is to be decided, while the coins will be exchangeable for a period of five years.
Campaign for rapid withdrawal of national banknotes and coins		Depends on the day of the € introduction
Frontloading and sub-frontloading		The frontloading of banks will start three months ahead of €-day and sub-frontloading of the non-financial sector will start one month before €-day.
ATMs issuing euro only		Not planned yet
Change in euro only		Yes
Dual display of prices		The mandatory dual display of prices will be introduced within one month after the announcement of the official conversion rate and will continue for twelve months after the changeover date. The first version of the Recommendation on the dual display of prices was elaborated in 2009: http://www.zavedenieura.cz/cps/rde/xbcr/euro/Doporucene_postupy_dualni_oznacovani_cen__pdf.pdf

	Bulgaria	Czech Republic
Consumer confidence building measures (e.g. voluntary Fair Pricing Agreements)		A voluntary agreement with retailers (fair-pricing agreement) and a 'memorandum of understanding', to be signed by retail and services sector and consumer protection associations. These measures should be launched no later than one month after the announcement of the conversion rate. The basic principles of the price monitoring and control were elaborated by the Information Technology and Statistics WG in November 2009: http://www.zavedenieura.cz/cps/rde/xchg/euro/xsl/dokumenty_metodiky.html
Adaptation of national law		The necessary adaptations of national law have been analysed by the Legislation Working Group of the National Coordination Group. On 1 March 2009 the Government decided to adopt an 'indirect' approach to adaptations of legal system, combined with individual adjustments of legal texts, if necessary. A general timetable of legal adjustments was elaborated with a view to introducing the euro. http://www.zavedenieura.cz/cps/rde/xbcr/euro/Priprava_pravniho_prostredi_na_zavedeni_aura_pdf.pdf
Euro banknotes and coins		
Design of the national side		Not planned yet
Number of different coin designs		Not planned yet
Coin supplier		Suppliers would be chosen via a public call for tender.
Estimate of the need for banknotes and coins		Not planned yet
Communication activities		
Communication strategy		A draft version was prepared in September 2009 by the Communication Working Group.
Activities		The leaflet "Preparations of the Czech Republic for the adoption of the euro" was printed and distributed country-wide in June 2007. The conference "The euro – our future currency" was held in October 2007 in Prague.
Addresses of websites on euro changeover:		Government EU information department: http://www.euroskop.cz/euro Ministry of Finance: http://www.mfcr.cz/euro National changeover website (in Czech and English): http://www.zavedenieura.cz Czech National Bank: http://www.cnb.cz/en/international_relations/euro/
Partnership agreement		

	Bulgaria	Czech Republic
Other issues		The guidelines on rounding and smoothing of prices prepared by the NCG Management Committee in October 2007, the estimate of budgetary costs of smoothing in the public sector published in March 2008 and the guidelines for the preparations of the banking sector for the introduction of euro prepared by the Financial Sector WG in 2008 and updated in 2009 are available at: http://www.zavedenieura.cz/cps/rde/xchg/euro/xsl/dokumenty_metodiky.html
ERM II entry		
Twinning agreement		Following the twinning project between the National Bank of Belgium, the Czech Ministry of Finance and the Czech National Bank (2007-2008), another twinning project between the French authorities (Adetef), the Czech Ministry of Finance and the National Bank of Slovakia ended in 2011.

	Croatia	Hungary
Changeover organisation		
National target date for euro adoption	Croatia has not yet set the target date for euro adoption and the practical preparations have not yet been launched.	A target date has not been set.
National co-ordinating institution		The National Euro Coordination Committee co-ordinating the practical preparations for the changeover is composed of high level representatives of Ministries, central governmental institutions and the Magyar Nemzeti Bank, the central bank of Hungary, responsible for the first phase of the practical preparation.
(Approved) National Changeover Plan		National Changeover Plan (as updated in November 2009): http://www.mnb.hu/MNBEuro_Index/mnbhu_euro_mai_n_1
Changeover details		
Type of scenario		"Big-bang".
Dual circulation period		Shorter than one month, exact length is to be decided
Exchange of national banknotes and coins		The conditions and the length of the period for the exchange of national banknotes and coins are yet to be decided. However, in accordance with the prevailing law, forint coins and notes may be exchanged at face value at the Magyar Nemzeti Bank within five and twenty years, respectively, from the date when the forint is withdrawn from circulation (the end date of the dual circulation period).
Campaign for rapid withdrawal of national banknotes and coins		
Frontloading and sub-frontloading		Conditions for frontloading and sub-frontloading to be established six months before €-day. Sub-frontloading to businesses: to be started several weeks before €-day, to be completed by €-day at the latest.

	Croatia	Hungary
ATMs issuing euro only		
Change in euro only		From €-day customers receive back all change in euro (including the dual circulation period)
Dual display of prices		Compulsory: from the earliest possible date after the conversion rate is irrevocably fixed until the 30 June following €-day.
Consumer confidence building measures (e.g. agreements with retailers)		Voluntary agreements on fair pricing should be signed with retailers and service providers. The signatories will be entitled to use a special logo. Prices should be regularly monitored by public institutions and organisations of consumers. The results of the monitoring are to be regularly communicated to citizens.
Adaptation of national law		The National Plan provides for an 'umbrella law' plus individual adjustments of legal texts if necessary.
Euro banknotes and coins		
Design of the national side		To be decided.
Nr of different coin designs		
Coin supplier		To be decided.
Estimation on the need for banknotes and coins		To be decided.
Communication activities		
Communication strategy		The section on communication in the National Changeover Plan defines basic principles, actors, messages and target groups for the communication on the euro.
Addresses of websites on euro changeover: Government/Ministry of Finance; Central Bank		Dedicated national euro website: Hungarian version: http://www.mnb.hu/Root/MNB/Euro_oldalak English version: http://english.mnb.hu/Root/ENMNB/Euro_oldalak
Partnership agreement		
Other issues		
ERM II entry		
Twinning agreement		AT and HU on communication and information strategy (finalised). FR- HU: A three day seminar on public sector preparations for the changeover, legal and communication issues was held in Budapest FR-SK-HU twinning programme started in 2010.

	Poland	Romania
Changeover organisation		

	Poland	Romania
National target date for euro adoption	A target date has not been set.	1 January 2019
National co-ordinating institution	The organisational structure for euro adoption comprises the National Coordination Committee for Euro Changeover, the Coordinating Council, as well as eight Working Committees and two Task Groups. The Committee and the Council are chaired by the Government Plenipotentiary for the Euro Adoption in Poland and co-chaired by the Plenipotentiary of the Management Board of Narodowy Bank Polski. Overall, more than 30 institutions are involved in the organisational structure for euro adoption in Poland.	The Interministerial Committee for Changeover to the Euro is composed of high level representative of Ministries and central governmental institutions. It is chaired by the Prime Minister and co-chaired by the Governor of the National Bank of Romania (NBR).
(Approved) National Changeover Plan	The Guidelines for National Euro Changeover Plan were published in 2010 after approval by the Council of Ministers. The National Euro Changeover Plan was approved in 2011 by European Committee of Council of Ministers. An update of NECP is under preparation.	
Changeover details		
Type of scenario	Not decided yet.	
Dual circulation period		
Exchange of national banknotes and coins		
Campaign for rapid withdrawal of national banknotes and coins		
Frontloading and sub-frontloading		
ATMs issuing euro only		
Change in euro only		
Dual display of prices	To be specified in the update of National Euro Changeover Plan.	
Consumer confidence building measures (e.g. agreements with retailers)	To be specified in the update of National Euro Changeover Plan.	
Adaptation of national law	A review of necessary amendments was prepared and is to be regularly updated by Working Committee for Legal Adjustments.	

	Poland	Romania
Euro banknotes and coins		
Design of the national side	To be specified in the update of National Euro Changeover Plan.	
Nr of different coin designs		
Coin supplier		
Estimate of the need for banknotes and coins		
Communication activities		
Communication strategy	Prepared by the Working Committee for Communication Strategy in 2011 and approved by the Coordinating Council. To be published along with the update of National Euro Changeover Plan (as a supplementary document).	A draft communication strategy was prepared by the NBR in April 2011, just before the Interministerial Committee for Changeover to the Euro was created.
Activities	In cooperation with the European Commission, Narodowy Bank Polski has organised a travelling exhibition "Euro – a currency for Europe", with multiple stops in Polish regional capitals. The project started in 2012 and will be finished in December 2014.	In 2011 the NBR hosted the European Central Bank's Euro Exhibition, with more than 6,500 visits in two months: http://www.bnr.ro/Expozitia-euro-6472.aspx In June 2011 the EC, NBR and the Ministry of Public Finance have jointly organized the International Conference "Economic Governance in the EU": http://www.bnr.ro/Guvernanta-economica-in-UE--6993.aspx
Addresses of websites on euro changeover: Ministry of Finance/Government; Central Bank	Website of the Government Plenipotentiary for the Euro Adoption in Poland: www.euro.mf.gov.pl Website of Narodowy Bank Polski: www.nbp.pl/euro	On the NBR website there is a special section dedicated to euro adoption issues. http://www.bnr.ro/Procesul-de-pregatire-pentru-adoptarea-monedei-unice-europene-8012.aspx
Partnership agreement		
Other issues		
ERM II entry		
Twinning agreement	2005-2006 DE-PL on communication and information strategy and other practical aspects of the changeover 2011-2012 Twinning agreement with Austria, the Netherlands and Slovakia.	

	Sweden
Changeover plan	
National target date for euro adoption	A target date has not been set.
National co-ordinating institution	
(Approved) National Changeover Plan	
Changeover details	
Type of scenario	

	Sweden
Dual circulation period	
Exchange of national banknotes and coins	
Campaign for rapid withdrawal of national banknotes and coins	
Frontloading and sub-frontloading	
ATMs issuing euro only	
Change in euro only	
Dual display of prices	
Consumer confidence building measures (e.g. agreements with retailers)	
Adaptation of national law	
Euro banknotes and coins	
Design of the national side	
Nr of different coin designs	
Coin supplier	
Estimation on the need for banknotes and coins	
Communication activities	
Communication strategy	
Addresses of websites on euro changeover: Government/Ministry of Finance; Central Bank	
Partnership agreement	
Other issues	
ERM II entry	
Twinning agreement	