



# INTERPOL

## FACT SHEET

# Counterfeit currency

The circulation of counterfeit currency poses a serious threat to national economies, financial institutions and consumers worldwide. It fuels the underground economy and finances the activities of organized criminal networks and terrorists. A strong network of partnerships between the law enforcement community and the private sector is integral to putting effective solutions into place.

### ► ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Recent developments in photographic, computer and printing technologies, along with the availability of low-cost equipment, have made the production of counterfeit money relatively easy. There is an obvious financial impact as counterfeit currency reduces the value of genuine currency, has an impact on the consumer through inflation, and leads to monetary losses for companies. There is also a proven connection with organized crime networks who use counterfeit money to finance illegal activities such as trafficking in human beings and drugs, and even terrorism.

### ► INTERPOL'S UNIQUE ROLE

One of the original mandates behind the creation of INTERPOL, was suppression of international currency counterfeiting. Since the Geneva Convention of 1929, the INTERPOL General Secretariat has functioned as the International Central Office for the Suppression of Counterfeit Currency.

While the techniques of counterfeiting have become more sophisticated, so too have the tools and services that INTERPOL provides to its member countries. These include technical databases, forensic support, training and operational assistance.

### ► ONLINE TOOLS AND SERVICES

The sharing of data among countries and sectors is essential in order to combat the counterfeiting and distribution of currency. With this aim in mind, INTERPOL facilitates bilateral and multilateral exchange of information on operational matters, such as the seizure of counterfeit notes and the closure of illegal print shops.

A number of web-based tools are available to authorized users via INTERPOL's secure communication network, known as I-24/7:

- Counterfeit Alerts – alerts concerning newly discovered counterfeit banknotes in international contexts (except USD and EUR), along with a detailed forensic analysis;
- Counterfeit Currency Statistics – annual statistical reports detailing quantities and types of counterfeit banknotes reported by INTERPOL member countries;
- Early Warning Messages – detailed alerts published by the European Central Bank and Europol to provide relevant information about counterfeit Euro banknotes;
- Documentchecker Banknotes, from Keesing Technology – an online reference database that enables inspection and authentication of more than 4,800 different banknotes, including a library of over 70,000 images and details of security features.

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### ► FORENSIC LABORATORY

INTERPOL runs a Counterfeit Currency and Security Documents laboratory, providing forensic support to investigators. Services include:

- Sourcing, analysing and storing specimens of newly issued banknotes;
- Analysing, classifying and storing counterfeit banknotes;
- Allocating international indicatives to newly discovered counterfeit banknotes (except for USD and EUR);
- Producing technical analytical reports.

### ► TRAINING

It is essential to equip the law enforcement community and other relevant parties – such as financial institutions – with the knowledge, skills and best practices to successfully detect and investigate currency counterfeiting.

INTERPOL has implemented a number of training courses and seminars, often in partnership with other organizations, which combine to form a comprehensive capacity building programme. The ultimate goal is to enhance knowledge and encourage innovation, in order to turn training into operational practice.

### ► COOPERATION

Currency counterfeiting is a problem that cannot be dealt with by law enforcement alone. We work closely with other stakeholders including monetary issuing authorities, central banks and the security printing industry.

Among our partners are the Center for Latin American Monetary Studies, European Central Bank, European Commission Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, ENFSI European Document Experts Working Group, Europol, Law Enforcement Advisory Group of the Central Bank Counterfeit Deterrence Group, and the United States Secret Service.



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#### ► CONTACT INFORMATION:

Contact us via our web site. For matters relating to specific crime cases, please contact your local police or the INTERPOL National Central Bureau in your country.

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