

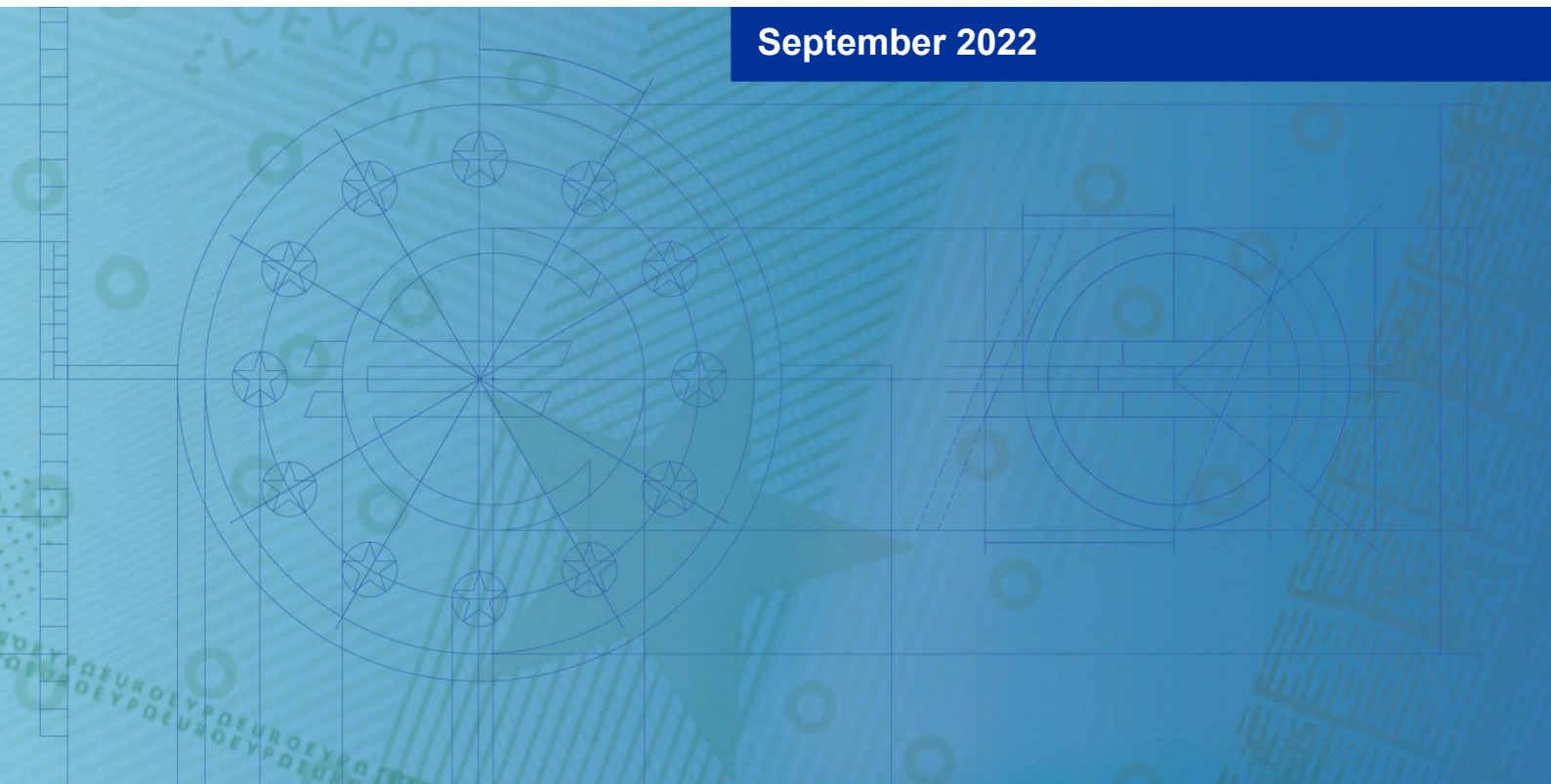


EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK

EUROSYSTEM

Theme Advisory Group report on the selection of a theme for future euro banknotes

September 2022



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Executive summary

The Theme Advisory Group (TAG) is an independent and multidisciplinary group established in the second half of 2021 to advise on and propose a shortlist of new themes for future euro banknotes. Its members were appointed by the European Central Bank (ECB) based on proposals from euro area national central banks. The Group considered 29 themes in total – based on members’ own ideas and the public’s input – which were evaluated against certain criteria. The 29 themes considered, and the criteria used, are described in the report.

There was a broad consensus among TAG members that they should try to avoid suggesting motifs or narratives that draw too heavily upon any one national culture. Members also felt that themes should avoid the gender biases inherent in many representations of Europe’s past. There was a strong overall preference for imagery that could connect the banknotes to a dynamic Europe of people and nature over any undue emphasis on institutions or static symbols of the past. TAG members hoped to be able to propose themes that could convey a strong sense of shared European values while at the same time resonating powerfully with European citizens. Equally, TAG members, while highly conscious of the importance of contemporary events, acknowledged the need for the banknotes to be relevant and recognisable to those who will use them in decades to come.

A shortlist of six themes was produced following an internal voting procedure. The themes were ranked as follows, with the full support of the Group.

“European values mirrored in nature”

Description

The six banknotes feature the six values of the European Union as defined in the Treaty of Lisbon: human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law, and human rights. We will use visual imagery to convey a seventh value: our connection to, and respect for, our environment and the natural world.

Story

Europe is not only a living place, it is also an idea. And the EU is not just an organisation, but also a set of values.

We bring these values together with nature as components of the same underlying ethos. We reaffirm the role of European values as the building blocks of a Europe of the people, by the people, for the people. Sustainability and environmental

preservation are then incorporated as a further fundamental value. These are European values, naturally.

Advantages

- The two key ideas of this theme – European values and nature – were two of the most popular themes proposed in the focus groups.
- European values are inclusive of all nations and people in Europe. The theme is timeless and transcends all borders.

Disadvantages

- Given that values are somewhat abstract concepts, the success of this theme will greatly depend on the design chosen to represent the values. At the same time, representing these abstract yet extremely important concepts on the banknotes is quite a magical thing.

“Birds: free, resilient and inspiring”

Description

This theme is inspired by the EU Birds Directive, which aims to protect all of the 500 wild bird species in the EU. The Directive is one of the oldest pieces of EU legislation on the environment and exemplifies the shared responsibility and cooperation of the EU's 27 Member States. It also reminds us of the need to share our continent with all life forms that sustain our common existence. These birds are real and vivid in themselves and also a symbol of our collective identity.

Story

Birds have always lived near humans, and by closely observing their appearance and behaviour over the centuries, we have learned a lot about the environment and ourselves.

Birds do not care about national borders so they have always symbolised freedom and aspiration. Their nests remind us of our own desire to build places and societies where we can nurture the future. In their songs we hear our own appreciation of free and beautiful expression. When they return with their seasonal migration, we feel hope. They enrich the world without depleting it – as we should too.

Advantages

- This theme has a strong European dimension and a bold message for sustainability.
- It creates an emotional connection and is legible, inclusive and timeless.
- It lends itself to a visually pleasing and memorable design.
- It reveals the diversity of Europe's nature, landscapes and seasons.

Disadvantages

- Some people do not like or are afraid of birds (ornithophobia).
- Some other countries have birds on their banknotes.

“The future is yours”

Description

This theme creates “portraits” of Europeans of the future. The bearers of these banknotes are the bearers of the collective imagination in which people create their own, as yet undefined, possibilities.

This theme shows the boundless potential of Europeans and the dream to be portrayed on the banknote one day.

Story

The ideas and innovations that will determine Europe's future lie deep within every European. Europe is shaped by your thoughts, your dreams, your skills and your inventions. The future is yours.

Advantages

- It highlights innovation, ideas and new perspectives for Europe.
- It connects the past to the present and the future.
- It is inclusive and emotive.

Disadvantages

- It could be seen as a theme for younger people.
- It is very abstract.

“Rivers: the waters of life in Europe”

Description

This theme combines the public’s strong desire for banknotes that celebrate the natural wonders of Europe with a broader message about interconnectedness and sustainability.

Story

Europe’s rivers cross borders. They connect us to each other and to nature. They remind us of the deep sources of our common life and also represent the flow and flux of a dynamic, ever-changing continent. They nurture us and we must nurture them in return.

Advantages

- This proposal includes the values that we share and should protect, but the theme is not abstract.
- Rivers cross borders freely.
- Rivers connect and facilitate trade.
- Preserving nature is one of the most important goals of Europe and Europeans.
- Timeless and natural beauty.

Disadvantages

- No emotional connection.
- Not strictly a European theme.

“Hands: together we build Europe”

Description

This theme creates a physical and easily understood representation of the six core values of the EU: human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law and human rights. It also takes inspiration from the motto of the European Union: “United in diversity”. The human hand – familiar to us all but never the same in any two people – is used to make these abstract ideas feel more immediate and human.

Story

“Hands: together we build Europe” uses a universal language to celebrate diversity and unity. It represents everyone who has shaped Europe through our shared EU values. Hands have built Europe – its physical infrastructure, its artistic heritage, its literature, and its many other features. Hands build, weave, heal, teach, guide, and so much more. Hands tell tales of labour, age and relationships. They also share stories of heritage, history and culture. It is time to celebrate the hands that have built Europe and continue to do so every day.

Advantages

- Gives a sense of unity and togetherness.
- Easy to visualise.
- A story focused on people rather than countries.
- Timeless: hands as expressers of human emotion.
- It is very strong on emotive connectivity, since hands are the tool of human touch.

Disadvantages

- The symbols could be misinterpreted. (A good design is therefore crucial. Some research into anthropological aspects would also be helpful to avoid any embarrassing misunderstanding across cultures.)
- Citizens connect much more easily with nature, animals and people, although this issue can be addressed through a good design. The theme does not exclude the possibility of incorporating these aspects and, of course, hands belong to people.

- Some similarities with Swiss franc banknotes, although they tell different stories.

“Our Europe, ourselves”

Description

We each have our own story. We each create our own identity. But we also share a common identity as Europeans. We grow as individuals but also as part of a community, through our relationships with each other.

This theme indicates the freedom, the values and openness of people in Europe.

Story

The banknotes represent the individual and collective lives of the people who inhabit Europe through six different dimensions: being, doing, thinking, loving, communicating, and living. These are the ways in which we connect our inner selves to the outer world, the private to the public, self to society, the physical body to the symbolic realm.

Advantages

- It focuses on the individual within the framework of Europe.
- It opens the idea of European identity to everybody (within Europe and in the wider world).
- It focuses on individuality and on the symbolic understanding of being and togetherness.

Disadvantages

- Potential misunderstanding of the word “identity”.
- Very abstract.

1 Introduction

As part of its plans to redesign euro banknotes, on 6 December 2021 the European Central Bank (ECB) [announced](#) the launch of the process for selecting new themes and designs for future euro banknotes.

Once the design process has been completed, the Governing Council will authorise the production of new euro banknotes and decide on potential issuance dates. It can take several years for new banknotes to be developed, issued and put into circulation.

The theme and design process consists of two consecutive main steps.

- **Step 1:** Theme selection – establish a list of eligible themes and select the one(s) that will be used in the design contest.
- **Step 2:** Selection of designs – establish a list of possible motifs and organise a design contest.

This document focuses on the first step and, more specifically, on the work of the Theme Advisory Group (TAG), an independent and multidisciplinary group established in the second half of 2021 to advise on and propose a shortlist of new themes for future euro banknotes. The TAG has three objectives:

- review and take into account the findings from the qualitative research on future themes for euro banknotes, which was conducted via focus groups between December 2021 and March 2022;
- draw up a shortlist of potential themes and associated motifs, ranked in order of preference;
- draft a brief story for each of the themes on the final shortlist.

Once the TAG has made its proposals, the ECB will consult the public on their preferred themes from the shortlist.

To support the first step of the theme and design process, the ECB commissioned the market research company Ipsos to carry out qualitative research to find out the European public's views and preferences with regard to the theme of future euro banknotes¹. The research was conducted via online focus groups in all 19 euro area countries plus Croatia and Bulgaria. The purpose of the research was twofold: (i) to understand the public's preferences as to the theme of future euro banknotes, with a view to producing a list of preferred themes and associated motifs; and (ii) to understand public perceptions of the common design elements² of the current

¹ ECB, "Qualitative study on new themes for euro banknotes", 2022.

² Common design elements are images or symbols that are unrelated to the theme but are present for practical purposes and to express European identity.

Europa series of banknotes as well as possible new common design elements, again with the aim of drawing up a list of preferred common design elements.

2 Establishing the Theme Advisory Group

The TAG was established in the second half of 2021 in order to consider possible new themes for the future euro banknotes. The group comprises an eclectic mix of independent high-level experts drawn from diverse fields such as the history, natural and social sciences, the visual arts and technology and representing all the countries in the euro area.

Once the Governing Council had approved the process for developing new themes and designs, the ECB asked each national central bank in the euro area to nominate a maximum of three candidates to represent their country in the TAG. The ECB assessed all nominees and a final list of 19 members – representing each euro area country – was submitted to the ECB's Executive Board and to the Governing Council for approval. Malta and Estonia had to replace their respective nominees with new candidates early on in the process as the original candidates withdrew for personal reasons. At a later stage in the process the TAG members representing Portugal and Belgium stepped down owing to incompatible professional commitments. Because the TAG's work was already at an advanced stage, it was not considered appropriate to launch a process to select new nominees.

The final composition of the TAG (including three ECB representatives, who do not have voting rights) was as follows:

- Lisa Borgenheimer (Germany), Professor of Information Design, HfG Offenbach am Main
- Toomas Kiho (Estonia), Editor-in-chief, Akadeemia
- Fintan O'Toole (Ireland), Professor in Irish Letters, Princeton University, and columnist at The Irish Times
- Costas Varotsos (Greece), Artist and Professor, Faculty of Architecture, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
- Nuria Oliver (Spain), Director and Co-founder, ELLIS Alicante Unit, and Chief Data Scientist, DataPop Alliance
- Stéphane Distinguin (France), Founder and CEO, Fabernovel
- Fabio Beltram (Italy), Professor of Physics of Matter, Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa
- Demetrios Michaelides (Cyprus), Professor Emeritus of Classical Archaeology, University of Cyprus
- Ieva Zībārte (Latvia), Head of Exhibitions, Zuzeum Art Centre
- Marija Marcelionytė-Paliukė (Lithuania), Professor, Vilnius Academy of Arts

- Patrick Sanavia (Luxembourg), Director, Luxembourg National Heritage Office
- Emanuel Buttigieg (Malta), Associate Professor in Early Modern History, Department of History, Faculty of Arts, University of Malta
- Alice Twemlow (Netherlands), Professor of History, Theory and Sociology of Graphic Design and Visual Culture, University of Amsterdam
- Peter Aufreiter (Austria), General Director and Scientific Managing Director, Vienna Museum of Science and Technology
- Jana Arbeiter (Slovenia), Assistant Professor and Researcher, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana
- Silvia Miháliková (Slovakia), Professor and researcher, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Institute for Sociology, Trnava University
- Maaria Wirkkala (Finland), Artist
- Ton Roos (ECB), Chair, Directorate Banknotes, European Central Bank
- Paloma Varela (ECB), Secretary, Directorate Banknotes, European Central Bank
- Esther Tejedor (ECB), Observer, Directorate General Communications (replaced in May 2022 by Georgina Garriga), European Central Bank

Members from Portugal and Belgium who withdrew from the process:

- Stephan Vanfleteren (Belgium), Photographer
- Elvira Maria Correia Fortunato (Portugal), Vice-Rector, NOVA University of Lisbon

3 The work of the Theme Advisory Group

The TAG held nine meetings between 9 December 2021 and 7 July 2022, both virtually and in hybrid format. To facilitate the Group's work, TAG members were given some background information on the world of banknotes, the redesign process and similar redesign projects carried out by other central banks.

The Group was tasked with drawing up a shortlist of themes and associated motifs for future euro banknotes and to draft a story for each of the shortlisted themes. Members took into account the findings from the qualitative research on future themes. Each member was asked to draft two proposals for a theme: one based on their own ideas and one based on the input received from the public via the qualitative study conducted by Ipsos.

At the start of the process the TAG agreed on the criteria to be used in selecting the themes. After exchanging views and familiarising themselves with the criteria used in selecting the theme for the first series of euro banknotes, the TAG members identified seven criteria and classified them as either essential, main or desirable.

The Group also decided on the ranking method that they would use to produce a shortlist of themes ranked in order of preference. The TAG agreed that they would use an anonymous two-round voting system to obtain the final shortlist.

4 Theme criteria

The TAG agreed on seven criteria – which were classified as essential, main or desirable – and assessed all of the proposed themes against them. All of the themes met the essential criteria.

Essential criteria

- European: the theme should symbolise Europe, carry a message of European unity and integration and represent European citizens and European values. Chief among these values are democracy and the equal dignity of all people.
- Inclusive: the theme should transcend any set of meanings specific to any one Member State or to any one historic, cultural or gender identity. It should speak to people of all ages and backgrounds.

Main criteria

- Human/emotive: the theme should be inspiring, animate and able to connect with people's feelings, experiences and lives in a positive way.
- Acceptable: the theme should inspire the greatest possible degree of assent and enthusiasm from the general public.
- Legible: illustrations of the theme should strike a balance between being legible and understandable by everybody and being able to demonstrate a certain level of depth and complexity.

Desirable criteria

- Attractive: the theme should facilitate the portrayal of artistically accomplished and aesthetically pleasing design features with an appealing story and motifs.
- Timeless: the theme should not be affected by the passing of time or reflect contemporary events that might not be topical in the future.

5 Voting and ranking process

The TAG agreed that a two-round online voting system would be used to arrive at a final shortlist.

The first round of voting was conducted anonymously online. TAG members were not allowed to vote for their own proposals. During this round, the TAG assessed the 29 proposed themes against the previously defined criteria (essential, main and desirable). If a theme was not considered to be European or inclusive, it was assigned a score of zero and eliminated from the selection process. Themes that met the essential criteria were awarded a score from 1 to 5 (with 5 being the highest) for each of the main and desirable criteria. Therefore, the maximum possible score a theme could receive was 25, and the minimum was zero.

Members voted on the 29 themes, and the Group agreed to review the ten highest ranked themes, also with a view to merging similar proposals. This resulted in a shortlist of six themes, which were then put through to a second round of voting.

The second round of voting was conducted using the paired comparison method, whereby the themes were compared against each other and the difference in importance assigned a value from 0 to 3. This second round of voting resulted in the final shortlist of six ranked themes.

6 Theme proposals

It was decided that each TAG member would propose two themes – one based on their own ideas and one based on input from the public – and that they would assess their proposals against the previously defined criteria (essential, main and desirable). During the process some members decided to submit just one theme proposal. Each member presented their proposal(s) to the group in the meetings held on 21 April 2022 and 12 May 2022. These presentations were followed by extensive discussions.

The Group proposed 29 themes in total, which generally reflected the broader theme proposals suggested by the public in the qualitative research.

There was a broad consensus among TAG members that they should try to avoid suggesting motifs or narratives that draw too heavily upon on any one national culture

Members felt that themes should avoid the gender biases inherent in many representations of Europe's past. There was a strong overall preference for imagery that could connect the banknotes to a dynamic Europe of people and nature over any undue emphasis on institutions or static symbols of the past. TAG members hoped to be able to propose themes that could convey a strong sense of shared European values while at the same time resonating powerfully with European citizens. Equally, TAG members, while highly conscious of the importance of contemporary events, acknowledged the need for the banknotes to be relevant and recognisable to those who will use them in decades to come. The theme should be forward-looking while reflecting contemporary perspectives and dimensions.

Many TAG members were of the view that EU or European values should be captured in the bank notes in some way. The discussions revealed different ideas, such as EU values, EU institutions, key figures in the history of the EU, and EU symbols. In the end, most proposals appeared to be grounded in, or draw inspiration from, the concept of EU values and how the theme could foster a better understanding of EU values today while also linking the ideals of Europe's ancient past to its bright future.

The Group also considered how themes could reference the climate crisis and biodiversity loss – as one of the biggest challenges facing Europeans – or a future with diverse European communities and people crossing borders.

6.1 The TAG's final theme proposals

Below is the final shortlist of themes proposed by the TAG, ranked in order of preference.

6.1.1 “European values mirrored in nature”

Description

The six banknotes feature the six values of the European Union as defined in the Treaty of Lisbon: human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law and human rights. We also use visual imagery to convey a seventh value: our connection to, and respect for, our environment and the natural world.

Story

Europe is not only a living place, it is also an idea. And the EU is not just an organisation, but also a set of values.

We bring these values together with nature as aspects of the same underlying ethos. We reaffirm the role of European values as the building blocks of a Europe of the people, by the people, for the people. Sustainability and environmental preservation are then incorporated as a further fundamental value. These are European values, naturally.

Potential motifs

The six banknotes align nicely with the six core values of Europe. So each euro banknote represents one European value illustrated with different natural scenes on the front and other more human/planet-centric motifs on the back.

€5: Freedom

Front: animals – birds flying freely in the sky.

Back: humans – a human-based depiction of the value of freedom, such as a person or a group of people moving freely, dancing or running.

€10: Human dignity

Front: mountain landscape – a mountain range or a majestic mountain.

Back: humans – a baby’s hand holding or touching an older hand.

€20: Democracy

Front: coastal landscape – a seascape with a beach. Every grain of sand and every drop of water matter, just as every European citizen counts.

Back: humans/monuments – democracy through the lens of monuments, with a depiction of the hemicycle of the European Parliament building in Brussels, juxtaposed with a hand voting or a group of people raising their hands as a symbol of democracy.

€50: Equality

Front: forest landscape – forest scene with trees. The trees appear equal, yet they are different and contribute equally to the forest.

Back: humans/science and education – equality is depicted through the lens of science and education, with a particular emphasis on healthcare, for example a physician treating a patient while surrounded by students or the hand of healing and concern extended to all.

€100: Rule of law

Front: river landscape – a river on its inexorable path towards the sea, flowing within its banks, free but controlled and channelled.

Back: humans – an image of justice, either the traditional motif of blind justice with the scales or a more representative image of justice.

€200: Human rights

Front: flower landscape – diverse flowers, each different, each beautiful, each precious, represent diverse societies which together form a beautiful bouquet. Human rights are necessary for a society to blossom.

Back: humans and environment – motifs related to human and environmental diversity with an emphasis on the green transition and climate change. This banknote (the highest-value banknote in the series) will emphasise diversity between people and between our ecosystems as necessary pillars for a healthy and blooming society and planet.

Advantages

- The two key ideas in this theme – European values and nature – were two of the most popular themes proposed in the focus groups.
- European values are inclusive of all nations and people in Europe. The theme is timeless and transcends all borders.

Disadvantages

- Given that values are somewhat abstract concepts, the success of this theme will greatly depend on the design chosen to represent the values. At the same time representing these abstract yet extremely important concepts on the banknotes is quite a beautiful thing.

6.1.2 “Birds: free, resilient and inspiring”

Description

This theme is inspired by the EU Birds Directive, which aims to protect all of the 500 wild bird species in the EU. The Directive is one of the oldest pieces of EU legislation on the environment and exemplifies the shared responsibility and cooperation of the EU's 27 Member. It also reminds us of the need to share our continent with all the life forms that sustain our common existence. These birds are real and vivid in themselves and also a symbol of our collective identity.

Story

Birds have always lived near humans, and by closely observing their appearance and behaviour over the centuries, we have learned a lot about the environment and ourselves.

Birds do not care about national borders so they have always symbolised freedom and aspiration. Their nests remind us of our own desire to build places and societies where we can nurture the future. In their songs we hear our own appreciation of free and beautiful expression. When they return with their seasonal migration, we feel hope. They enrich the world without depleting it – as we should too.

Potential motifs

Each banknote takes its imagery from a particular European bird. Each bird represents a season of the year and a type of European landscape and human activity. The birds mentioned below are for illustrative purposes only.

€5: Skylark

Seen in many European cultures as the harbinger of spring. On the banknote it is accompanied by the landscapes it inhabits: the farms and fields of agricultural life, exemplifying the value of day-to-day work.

€10: Cuckoo

The sound of our summers, the voice of our forests, hills and lush, blooming landscapes. They personify happiness and joy.

€20: Tern

A bird of the water and seascapes. It is a migrant, covering vast distances but also returning to the same colony to hatch its eggs. It stands for community and family values.

€50: Owl

A bird of winter which has long been a symbol of wisdom. It stands for Europe's living heritage of learning, science and reflection, and reminds us that our progress cannot come at the expense of the natural world.

€100: Stork

A bird of autumn and of villages, towns and cities. Their nests – on our chimneys and spires – remind us of how we can coexist with nature, giving it a place to be reborn and receive joy. This bird represents a link between folk wisdom and the modern world.

€200: Hoopoe and/or roller

These species are in rapid decline and will disappear from Europe if we do not act to protect them. The images on the banknotes should inspire preservation. They give us both a warning of what will happen if we do not move to a sustainable future and the hope that we can do so.

Advantages

- This theme has a strong European dimension and a bold message for sustainability.
- It makes an emotional connection and is legible, inclusive and timeless.

- It lends itself to a visually pleasing and memorable design.
- It reveals the diversity of Europe's nature, landscapes and seasons.

Disadvantages

- Some people do not like or are afraid of birds (ornithophobia).
- Some other countries have birds on their banknotes.

6.1.3 “The future is yours”

Description

This theme creates “portraits” of Europeans of the future. The bearers of these banknotes are the bearers of the collective imagination in which people create their own, as yet undefined, possibilities.

This theme shows the boundless potential of Europeans and the dream to be portrayed on the banknote one day.

Story

The ideas and innovations that will shape the future of Europe lie deep within every European. Europe is shaped in your thoughts, your dreams, your skills and your inventions. The future is yours.

Potential motifs

Every banknote has a placeholder for a “future portrait”, such as whitespace, an outline or a reflective surface. On one side, the motifs are symbolically represented through historical and/or current tools, methods and objects. On the other side, we see the future visions of the “future person” (you, the bearer of the note). Everybody can see themselves on the banknote in their future job or area of expertise.

€5: Education and knowledge

Philosophy, writing and research.

€10: Art

Painting, cinema, theatre, music, dance and architecture.

€20: Science and technology

Space, energy and industry.

€50: Media and communication

Information technology, digitalisation and virtual reality.

€100: Nature

Environment and sustainability.

€200: Democracy

Citizenship, activism and deliberation.

Advantages

- It highlights innovations, ideas and new perspectives for Europe.
- It connects the past to the present and the future.
- It is inclusive and emotive.

Disadvantages

- It could be seen as a theme for younger people.
- It is very abstract.

6.1.4 “Rivers: the waters of life in Europe”

Description

This theme combines the public’s strong desire for banknotes that celebrate the natural wonders of Europe with a broader message about interconnectedness and sustainability.

Story

Europe's rivers cross borders. They connect us to each other and to nature. They remind us of the deep sources of our common life and also represent the flow and flux of a dynamic, ever-changing continent. They nurture us and we must nurture them in return.

Potential motifs

Drawing inspiration from real European landscapes, the longest rivers that cross several countries and come from the highest mountains, this theme follows the stages of a river, from source to sea, through rugged mountains and grand cities, from quiet wilderness to busy commerce. It also draws on the many forms of water itself, from the single cell to the mighty torrent, from solid ice to rushing rapids. It draws on the deep European history of imagining and depicting rivers as gods and, in particular, goddesses – a spirit that is bountiful and life-giving but that must be honoured and protected.

The proposal gives the designer a possibility to journey through Europe to create a story.

One example for motifs could be:

€5: the beginning of a river coming from the mountain

€10, €20, €50 and €100: the river passes through valleys, cultivated landscapes, and historical and contemporary landscapes to arrive at...

€200: ... the sea.

Advantages

- This proposal includes the values that we share and should protect, but the theme is not abstract.
- Rivers cross borders freely.
- Rivers connect and facilitate trade.
- Preserving nature is one of the most important goals of Europe and the Europeans.
- Timeless and natural beauty.

Disadvantages

- No emotional connection.

- Not a strict European theme.

6.1.5 “Hands: together we build Europe”

Description

This theme creates a physical and easily understood representation of the six core values of the EU: human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law and human rights. It also takes inspiration from the motto of the European Union: “United in diversity”. The human hand – familiar to all of us but never the same in any two people – is used to make these abstract ideas feel more immediate and human.

Story

“Hands: together we build Europe” uses a universal language to celebrate diversity and unity. It represents everyone who has shaped Europe through our shared EU values. Hands have built Europe – its physical infrastructure, its artistic heritage, its literature, and its many other features. Hands build, weave, heal, teach, guide, and so much more. Hands tell tales of labour, age and relationships. They also share stories of heritage, history and culture. It is time to celebrate the hands that have built Europe and continue to do so every day.

Potential motifs

The organisation of the motifs/images on each banknote is inspired by the universal values as defined in the Lisbon Treaty. The suggested motifs/images try to capture as broad a representation of each topic as possible.

€5: The hands that carve human dignity

Hands with broken shackles and the sun shining through, symbolising the right to a dignified life.

€10: The hands that forge our freedoms

A hand holding a book, along with a dove and sunlight, in motion and moving in a vertical or diagonal direction to give a sense of moving forward.

€20: The hands that build democracy

A variety of hands that are building a structure alongside a hand with a ballot paper in the process of voting.

€50: The hands that encourage equality

Hands holding up the rainbow flag, along with a sign language interpretation symbol that stands for disability. Here again the hands can show different genders and ages. A possible alternative could be the creative use of a representation of the hands from Michelangelo's *The Creation of Adam*, which would be used to represent equality.

€100: The hands that fight for human rights

Represented through a focus on work, health, and the environment. A hand administering a vaccine and a hand planting a tree. A healthy life and a healthy environment are fundamental human rights and are the basis for a more sustainable EU.

€200: The hands that ensure justice (rule of law)

Represented by creating the scales of justice (a classic representation of justice) from a variety of hands coming together and supporting each side.

Advantages

- Gives a sense of unity and togetherness.
- Easy to visualise.
- A story focused on people rather than countries.
- Timeless: hands as expressers of human emotion.
- It is very strong on emotive connectivity, since hands are the tool of human touch.

Disadvantages

- The symbols could be misinterpreted. (A good design is therefore crucial. Some research into anthropological aspects would also be helpful to avoid any embarrassing misunderstanding across cultures.)
- Citizens connect much more easily with nature, animals and people, although this issue can be addressed through a good design. The theme does not

exclude the possibility of incorporating these aspects and, of course, hands belong to people.

- Some similarities with Swiss franc banknotes, although they tell different stories.

6.1.6 “Our Europe, ourselves”

Description

We each have our own story. We each create our own identity. But we also share a common identity as Europeans. We grow as individuals but also as part of a community, through our relationships with each other.

This theme indicates the freedom, the values and openness of people in Europe.

Story

The banknotes represent the individual and collective lives of the people who reside in Europe through six different dimensions: being, doing, thinking, loving, communicating, and living. These are the ways in which we connect our inner selves to the outer world, the private to the public, self to society, the physical body to the symbolic realm.

Potential motifs

Through these banknotes we all share the same identity. Each banknote has a pair of images, one drawn from the bodily and immediate representation of human individuality and the other from the symbolic order of common European values and aspirations:

Realistic/pictorial: standing for the living, self-created individual.

Symbolic: for the overall European concept, community and its values.

€5: Being

Faces and bodies.

€10: Loving

Heart, nurture, romantic, love and LGBTIQ+.

€20: Doing

Hands, action, interaction and gesture.

€50: Thinking

Brain, opinions and democratic deliberation, and learning.

€100: Living

Lungs, nature, animals, air and biodiversity.

€200: Communicating

Mouth, free speech, open expression and richness of languages.

Advantages

- It focuses on the individual within the framework of Europe.
- It opens the “European identity” to everybody (within Europe and in the wider world).
- It focuses on individuality and on the symbolic understanding of being and togetherness.

Disadvantages

- Misunderstanding of the word “identity”.
- Very abstract.

6.2 The TAG'S original theme proposals:

Country	Proposal 1	Proposal 2
Germany	Identity	Portraits – The Future is Yours
Estonia	The Spheres	The Makers: those who have made Europe
Ireland	The six stages of the life of the European citizen	
Greece	Roots of Europe: Art and Architecture	
Spain	Networks and Connections	The Nature of Values, the Value of Nature, or European Values, naturally
France	Food/European recipes	Nature in Europe (climates, seas or rivers)
Italy	Europe's legacy in the world	The European Union: its institutions and values
Cyprus	The Universal Impact of European Architecture	Women, protagonists in European and World Culture
Latvia	Food	Nature – Seasons
Lithuania	Wild birds	
Luxembourg	Landscapes, natural monuments and nature to preserve	Men, Women and Architecture making Europe
Malta	The hands that build Europe	We are Europe
Netherlands	European Folktales – from Myths to the Metaverse	Birds and Biomes
Austria	EU Values and	EU institutions
Slovenia	United in diversity or Unique in our Diversity	Live, breathe, sustain
Finland	Nature – tree – trees – forest	Nature – water

There are no proposals from Portugal and Belgium, as their members stepped down from TAG. Given the advanced stage of the process, it was agreed not to seek replacements for these members. For other reasons, no proposals were submitted by the member from Slovakia.

7 TAG suggestions for the design guidelines

TAG members also suggested some ideas for the design guidelines in the next step of the redesign process.

1. All the banknotes could fit together in such a way that when the six banknotes are arranged next to each other, the individual designs connect to make one larger image, for example:
 - (a) a handshake extending across the six banknotes;
 - (b) the circle of stars across the six banknotes.
2. While there were different views on this idea, it was suggested that each side of the banknotes could have a different purpose. For instance, the front would be the more “creative” side featuring the theme, and the back would be the more “practical” side containing some of the common design elements.
3. The future banknotes could have a digital dimension, using different techniques, such as augmented reality, to allow the public to learn more about the banknotes. Augmented reality is already used in other banknotes³.
4. Some of the security features, such as iridescence and holograms, could be used to show dimensionality and movement.
5. Common design elements to be included:
 - (a) The issuer (ECB), and the acronym in all languages
 - (b) The year of first issuance
 - (c) Signature
 - (d) Map of Europe, without political borders
 - (e) Flag and/or circle of stars

³ Augmented reality has been used in banknotes issued by the Central Bank of Honduras (see [YouTube video](#)) and the Bank of Mexico (see [Tweet](#)).

Annexes

List of TAG members

Lisa Borgenheimer

Germany, Professor of Information Design, HfG Offenbach am Main.

Lisa Borgenheimer has professional experience as information designer at Süddeutsche Zeitung and ZEIT Online, among others, and has worked internationally as a lecturer and freelancer. Borgenheimer holds a master's degree in interactive media systems from the Hochschule Augsburg and is currently pursuing a doctorate at Bauhaus University Weimar.

Toomas Kiho

Estonia, Editor-in-chief, Akadeemia.

Toomas Kiho is the Editor-in-chief of Akadeemia. Between 2016 and 2020 he was the Head of the Steering Committee of Estonia 100. Previously he acted as Counsellor to the Prime Minister of Estonia and Counsellor to the President of Estonia. Kiho holds a PhD in mathematics from the University of Tartu, Estonia.

Fintan O'Toole

Ireland, Professor in Irish Letters, Princeton University, and columnist at The Irish Times.

Fintan O'Toole has published over 20 books on cultural and political history, including "A History of Ireland in 100 Objects", "Heroic Failure: Brexit and the Politics of Pain" and most recently "We Don't Know Ourselves: A Personal History of Modern Ireland". He has won both the Orwell Prize and the European Press Prize for his journalism. He is a member of the Royal Irish Academy.

Costas Varotsos

Greece, Artist and Professor, Faculty of Architecture, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

Costas Varotsos was elected as a Professor in the Architecture Faculty of the Polytechnic University of Thessaloniki in 1999. His art pieces can be found in public spaces in Greece, Cyprus, Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Egypt and in the United States. In 2014 he was honoured by the President of the Italian Republic, being awarded the title of Cavaliere della Repubblica Italiana for his contribution to the Italian arts. In 2017 he was honoured with the medal of the Brigadier of the Battalion of Honour from the President of the Hellenic Republic.

Nuria Oliver

Spain, Director and Co-founder, ELLIS Alicante Unit, and Chief Data Scientist, DataPop Alliance.

Nuria Oliver has over 25 years of research experience in human behaviour modelling and prediction from data and human-computer interaction. Oliver holds a PhD in artificial intelligence from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a degree in telecommunication engineering from the Technical University of Madrid.

Stéphane Distinguin

France, Founder and CEO, Fabernovel.

Stéphane Distinguin, a French entrepreneur and European tech and creative industries activist, founded the international innovation agency Fabernovel in 2003 after graduating from ESCP with a master's in management. He also chairs the Grande École du Numérique, training over 10,000 young people every year to find a job in the digital economy.

Fabio Beltram

Italy, Professor of Physics of Matter, Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa.

Fabio Beltram holds doctor's degrees in physics and in electronic engineering and has carried out research and taught in the United States, France, and Italy. He is active in the field of nanotechnology, from electronics to biomedicine.

Demetrios Michaelides

Cyprus, Professor Emeritus of Classical Archaeology, University of Cyprus.

Demetrios Michaelides has professional experience in archaeology and the history of art, acquired during his time with the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus and the University of Cyprus. Michaelides holds a PhD from the University of London.

Ieva Zibārte

Latvia, Head of Exhibitions, Zuzeum Art Centre.

Ieva Zibārte is an award-winning architect, writer and curator. Currently Head of Exhibitions at Zuzeum Art Centre in Riga, she is also a member of the National Architecture Board at the Ministry of Culture and the Coin Design Committee at the Bank of Latvia.

Marija Marcelionytė-Paliukė

Lithuania, Professor, Vilnius Academy of Arts.

Marija Marcelionytė-Paliukė obtained a master's degree in graphic arts from the Vilnius Academy of Arts in 2001. She has taught at the Academy since 2007 and has acted as Head of the Graphic Art Department since 2014. Marcelionytė-Paliukė has more than 25 years of professional experience in arts.

Patrick Sanavia

Luxembourg, Director, Luxembourg National Heritage Office.

Patrick Sanavia graduated from the Robert Schuman University (Strasbourg) with a master's degree in law. He practised as a lawyer and worked as counsellor of legal affairs for the Ministry of Culture. Since September 2008 Sanavia has worked as the

director of the Luxembourg National Heritage Office, whose mission is to preserve the built heritage of the Luxembourg State.

Emanuel Buttigieg

Malta, Associate Professor in Early Modern History, Department of History, Faculty of Arts, University of Malta.

Emanuel Buttigieg is an Associate Professor in early modern history at the University of Malta. He read for his PhD at the University of Cambridge and is an expert on the Knights of Malta (the Knights of St John/the Hospitallers). He is also interested in the history of gender, slavery and rituals.

Alice Twemlow

Netherlands, Professor of History, Theory and Sociology of Graphic Design and Visual Culture, University of Amsterdam.

Alice Twemlow is a design historian and critic, with three decades of experience in research and education at institutions including the University of Amsterdam, Leiden University and the Royal Academy of Art, The Hague. She earned her master's and PhD in history of design from the Royal College of Art/V&A Museum, London.

Peter Aufreiter

Austria, General Director and Scientific Managing Director, Vienna Museum of Science and Technology.

Peter Aufreiter is a cultural manager with 20 years of experience in various museums in Austria and Italy. He has been the Director General of the Austrian Federal Museum of Technology since January 2020. Aufreiter holds a master's degree from the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Vienna.

Jana Arbeiter

Slovenia, Assistant Professor and Researcher, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana.

Jana Arbeiter holds a PhD in diplomacy and is an Assistant Professor and Researcher at the Centre of International Relations (Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana). Her research and teaching focuses on diplomatic theory, diplomatic protocol, symbolism and theory of symbolic power, and development studies.

Silvia Miháliková

Slovakia, Professor and Researcher, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Institute for Sociology, Trnava University.

Silvia Miháliková has professional experience in university education and social science research in the field of political science and sociology, acquired at universities and research institutions in Slovakia and abroad. Miháliková is a Professor of Political Science.

Maaria Wirkkala

Finland, Artist.

Maaria Wirkkala creates moments and places mostly outside of traditional art spaces. Her exhibitions include many major group exhibitions, including Venice Biennale, Istanbul Biennial and several art festivals in Japan. She was the first laureate of the prestigious Ars Fennica prize.

Members from Portugal and Belgium who withdrew from the process:

Stephan Vanfleteren

Belgium, Photographer.

Stephan Vanfleteren is a world-renowned photographer who has worked as a photojournalist for the Belgian newspaper De Morgen and the Dutch newspaper De Volkskrant. He works almost exclusively in black and white. He covered important news events in the 1990s (current affairs, wars, etc.) and has continued to be featured in many newspapers and magazines worldwide ever since. He is also a visiting professor at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent. Vanfleteren has won many international awards and he is Doctor Honoris Causa of the Free University of Brussels.

Elvira Maria Correia Fortunato

Portugal, Vice-Rector, NOVA University of Lisbon.

Elvira Maria Correia Fortunato pioneered research on transparent/paper electronics. She won two grants from the European Research Council related to oxide electronics. Fortunato is an elected member of Academy of Engineering, European Academy of Sciences, Lisbon Academy of Sciences and Academia Europaea. She was formerly Chief Scientific Adviser at the European Commission.

Theme proposals

Germany

Proposal 1

Name	Lisa Borgenheimer
Theme 1	Identity The topic of identity describes us Europeans as individuals and as a community.
Description	<p>Each of us has our own story. A personal story of identity. A story that has travelled many paths. One that has changed or solidified. Something remains: a story, a memory, a life, a person.</p> <p>We all have individual identities and yet we all share a bigger one.</p> <p>Identity is a very personal experience and framework, but it is also shaped by a broader political, economic and social attachment to a particular system.</p> <p>It is an open and psychological subject and gives everyone the freedom to find their place. It is a moment of self-reflection as an individual, but also as part of a community.</p> <p>We are all different, but being European means sharing the same European territory, the same history, the same languages, values and symbols, etc. The political framework of Europe is a human invention, and this theme should remind us of the humanity behind this concept. It should stand for millions of people who are symbolically united. This banknote indicates individual freedom, values and openness to people in Europe.</p>
Story	<p>The banknote should be a reminder of the humans living in Europe. The storyline is centred on the individuals and the idea of being. This is in strong relation to their acting and thinking. Overall, what leads us is loving and this can be achieved through communicating. In the end, living provides the basis for coexisting with nature and animals.</p> <p>It is about an inside and an outside, which symbolise the individual (inside e.g. watermark) and the European framework (outside; e.g. print finishing.).</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>We are all shaped by the values of the EU, but how do we actually experience them? It is an active moment of being, of gestures, of perspectives, of wishes and dreams, and it also carries our vision outward, as we are. In the end, we all share the same identity with these banknotes.</p> <p>All motifs should be visualised in two different ways: realistic/pictorial, standing for the living, self-reflected individual, and symbolic, for the overall European concept, community and its values.</p> <p>Each banknote focuses on how we are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> €5 – Being, e.g. human and gender €10 – Loving, e.g. heart and love €20 – Acting, e.g. hands, interaction and gesture €50 – Thinking, e.g. brain, opinions and democracy €100 – Living, e.g. lungs, nature, animals, air and biodiversity €200 – Communicating, e.g. mouth, languages and free speech
Additional comments	

Proposal 2

Name	Lisa Borgenheimer
Theme 2	Portraits – The Future is Yours The theme “The Future is Yours” describes European citizens as creators and an effective force.
Description	<p>Here we are. Our road was long. We have mastered many things, preserved the old and created the new. What remains, and what is to come? We build on our experience, our knowledge. But we use new ways and visions, adapted to the current time, to the future.</p> <p>We are now, yet also in the past and in the future.</p> <p>Working on or discussing future topics opens a dialogue about Europe’s goals for the future, goals which should be achieved together. These include diverse areas of competence that require further strategic development. But to do this, you need personalities of the future – clever minds who will turn these visions into reality.</p> <p>This topic presents the as yet unknown portraits of these special people who will guide Europe into the future and set new perspectives and standards.</p> <p>These banknotes show the possibilities available within different fields for the inhabitants of Europe and the dream to be portrayed on the banknote one day.</p>
Story	<p>We represent Europe and our current visions. Every new innovation is based on people’s will to move things forward. New thoughts, new ways, new strategies. We need young ideas and new portraits of the future.</p> <p>It does not depend who you are. It depends on your new visions, thoughts, dreams and results for Europe. The future is yours.</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>Every banknote has a placeholder for a “future portrait” (e.g. whitespace or an outline). The motifs are symbolically represented through historical or current tools, methods and objects (one side) and the future visions (other side).</p> <p>Each note shows this “future person” (via print finishing: e.g. a reflective mirror or a window. so that everybody can see themselves on the banknote) in his/her future job and field of competence (e.g. tools, methods, objects).</p> <p>This could be in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> €5 – Education: philosophy, writing, mathematics, physics €10 – Art: painting, sculpture, dance, architecture, music €20 – Science: technology, space, energy, transport, industry €50 – Media: communication, innovation, digitalisation €100 – Nature: environment, climate change €200 – Politics: values, rights, democracy
Additional comments	

Estonia

Proposal 1

Name	Toomas Kiho
Theme 1	<p>The Spheres</p> <p>In addition to "The Spheres" as the overall theme, there are individual sub-themes for each denomination.</p> <p>€5 – Lithosphere: the solid ground, our home planet</p> <p>€10 – Hydrosphere: the waters that give us life</p> <p>€20 – Biosphere: the green life we live</p> <p>€50 – Noosphere: the infrastructure we build</p> <p>€100 – Atmosphere: the air we breathe</p> <p>€200 – Semiosphere: the ideas we share and think</p>
Description	<p>We live in a world that is organised in concentric spheres. First, we have Earth as a stony planet – the lithosphere. But the Earth contains waters and oceans (the hydrosphere) and the sphere of living things (the biosphere). Earth is surrounded by the atmosphere, and there are also spheres made by humans: the noosphere of human-built infrastructure and the semiosphere, the sphere of our culture and human thinking.</p> <p>These spheres can be depicted on banknotes of different denominations, just as the spheres cover each other, the denominations overlap each other.</p>
Story	<p>Our Earth is a sphere. And we humans all share it. The biosphere is the environment we live in. The universal order has different layers, all of which are important for our survival: we need the ground to step on and to grow our food; we need water to drink and air to breathe; we need the heavens and we need our culture and thoughts to be human.</p> <p>Our responsibility is to preserve it, to preserve the biosphere and other spheres, and to preserve life. This is also a story about our responsibility with respect to the future – we must keep the world clean and green so we can pass it on to future generations. This is the only way to think in modern times, and Europe is at the forefront. The efforts to save the planet and the spheres are led by the countries of the EU.</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>Examples of the different banknotes:</p> <p>€5 – Lithosphere: boulders, rocks and mountains</p> <p>€10 – Hydrosphere: rivers, springs, lakes and seas</p> <p>€20 – Biosphere: plants, birds and animals</p> <p>€50 – Noosphere: roads, bridges and buildings</p> <p>€100 – Atmosphere: fresh air and greenhouse gas problem</p> <p>€200 – Semiosphere: universities, science and labs</p>
Additional comments	

Proposal 2

Name	Toomas Kiho
Theme 2	The Makers: those who have made Europe
Description	When discussing the symbols and themes that a "normal" (pan-European, inclusive, modern, attractive, timeless etc.) currency should have, one can notice a slight contradiction between the wishes and perception of the wider public and those of the decision-makers. One of the most frequent proposals from the focus groups of all ages, were portraits. Yet we (TAG) are not keen to move forward with portraits. We have realised that they are very country-specific and divisive. I am trying to prove the opposite, namely that Europe can and should be regarded as a definite cultural space; undoubtedly a certain European culture exists, and we can talk about a European way of thinking, of Europeanism, etc. It is time to get over separative borders within this space and to regard European culture as a whole. If we could achieve that, we would contribute a lot to the shared future of our continent. We have not been ready, until now. All European countries, while preserving their specific national cultures, still share certain European values: myths and legends, science, arts, technology and a common currency. There are uniting personalities who can be selected and depicted on the banknotes. Europe needs unity in diversity. This is a fruitful perspective for Europe.
Story	Europe is first and foremost a shared idea, so it is fully appropriate for its main currency to bravely use the power and stories of the intellectual development of the continent. The idea of Europe has been developed across the centuries by many thinkers and visionaries from every corner of Europe. However, there are still certain common values that make up and support the essence of Europe, its thinking, its past, and its visions for the future. There are people who have been influential in shaping these European values. Therefore, the main cornerstones of the European story, shared by every European of each era, of every age, nationality, sex etc. can be selected to be depicted on the banknotes. They will transcend internal borders and offer an opportunity to establish true European unity. This would be the real story of Europe. This would meet the expectations of vast numbers of Europeans, according to the results of the focus groups.
Associated motifs/images	Examples of the different banknotes: €5 – Europa, Εὐρώπη, the mythological originator of Europe €10 – Socrates, the teacher of all European philosophers €20 – Leonardo da Vinci, Europe's Renaissance icon par excellence €50 – Immanuel Kant, the founder of modern European thinking €100 – Ludwig Van Beethoven, composer of the European anthem €200 – Robert Schuman, founder of the European Union
Additional comments	

Ireland

Proposal 1

Name	Fintan O'Toole
Theme 1	<p>The six stages of the life of the European citizen.</p> <p>The theme celebrates the European values of equality, education, social care and democracy. Each note illustrates a different stage of human life.</p> <p>€5 – Parenthood, birth and infancy</p> <p>€10 – Childhood</p> <p>€20 – Education</p> <p>€50 – Work</p> <p>€100 – Creativity and joy</p> <p>€200 – Older years</p>
Description	<p>I think there is a strong desire emerging from our discussions and from the focus groups that the banknotes should be relatable, animate and capable of being easily understood by all citizens.</p> <p>There is, then, a very strong case for the use of human figures. But we have the problem that specific people cannot be represented because they may not transcend nationality, gender and other boundaries. The challenge is to be vividly human and humane without illustrating known individuals.</p> <p>The idea of the human life cycle meets this challenge. It suggests a Europe that values and cares for its citizens from the cradle to the grave – a celebration of the European social model.</p> <p>Because the people we will represent are imagined and stylised, they can be shown in a highly inclusive way.</p>
Story	<p>Europe is its people. Everything – governments, institutions, economies, banknotes – is rooted in the way we value the equal dignity of every citizen. Over the course of our individual lives, we each need the support of those systems and we each give life to them through our growth, our learning, our work, our imaginations, our accumulated memories.</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>Main: a human image from a stage of ordinary life.</p> <p>Sub-motif: possibly a subtle use of objects or images from oldest to newest in European culture.</p>
Additional comments	

Greece

Proposal 1

Name	Costas Varotsos
Theme 1	Roots of Europe: Art and Architecture
Description	<p>For European citizens, holding banknotes that represent their common roots would strengthen the feeling of being part of a shared experience at the present time.</p> <p>Art and architecture are pan-European. European unity and values were symbolically captured through culture and reflected in art and architecture over time.</p> <p>Art and architecture are inclusive. Diversity fuelled great art movements which, in turn, delivered a unified and widely accepted European language of culture.</p> <p>Art and architecture are emotional. Emotions are regarded as the keystone for experiencing art. Whether symbolic or realistic, art evokes emotion. We need to focus on emotion, as art does through its perspective.</p> <p>Art and architecture are reflective of contemporary European society. During a difficult period for the European continent, where many centrifugal forces threaten the core values which form the impressive European edifice, we need references to help us stand firmly on our origins as Europe and all the positive values to provide motivation for further development.</p> <p>Art and architecture are legible. Art and architecture have mechanisms that simplify complexity without losing the deepest meaning.</p>
Story	<p>Currently euro banknotes are issued in six denominations: €5, €10, €20, €50, €100 and €200. The designs for each banknote have a common theme of European architecture in various artistic eras. The architectural examples are stylised illustrations, not representations of existing monuments. The proposal is to keep the existing categorisation with references to real artworks. Art and architecture are products of culture. From the classical era to the modern 20th century period, art has expressed the evolution of Europe. European unity and values were symbolically captured through culture and reflected in art over time. Diversity fuelled great art movements which, in turn, delivered a unified and widely accepted European language of culture. The different nations of Europe share the same cultural eras. Therefore, one side of a banknote can refer to an artwork from Spain produced by a French artist, and the other side to an artwork from Germany by a Flemish artist, for example.</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>Classical era: Parthenon and Pantheon</p> <p>Gothic era: Renunciation of Worldly Goods by Giotto, and Notre-Dame de Paris</p> <p>Renaissance: The School of Athens by Raphael, and Santa Maria Novella by Leon Battista Alberti</p> <p>Baroque and Rococo: Landscape with a Rainbow by Peter Paul Rubens, and San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane by Francesco Borromini</p> <p>The age of iron and glass: Wheatfield with Crows by Vincent van Gogh, and the Eiffel Tower by Gustave Eiffel</p> <p>Modern 20th century: Guernica by Pablo Picasso, and Bauhaus Dessau by Walter Gropius</p>
Additional comments	

Spain

Proposal 1

Name	Nuria Oliver
Theme 1	Networks and Connections
Description	<p>Networks are the fabric of life and the foundation of societies.</p> <p>Transnational networks are a critical pillar of the European vision, where efficient transportation, energy, communications, social, cultural and ecological networks are key for the European digital and green transitions.</p> <p>Without such networks, the European project would not exist.</p> <p>The European project only makes sense if we are connected.</p> <p>If you want to walk fast, walk alone. But if you want to walk far, walk together.</p>
Story	<p>The history of Europe is the story of building and sustaining transnational networks – networks that connect and equalise all countries, strengthening the social, cultural, ethical, and economic cohesion between Europeans.</p> <p>Networks to connect and transport physical goods and people; networks to share knowledge, innovation and culture; networks to support each other, and networks that connect us to our environment and ecosystems.</p> <p>In a time of increased social polarisation and Euroscepticism, it is important to focus on what unites us rather than on what divides us.</p> <p>Networks build bridges rather than walls.</p> <p>Networks bring people together rather than set them apart.</p> <p>Networks enable the flow of goods, knowledge, culture and individuals, rather than blocking and censoring them.</p> <p>Networks make our impact on and interactions with the environment clear and help us to realise that we are part of something larger than ourselves.</p> <p>Together, connected by our networks, we are stronger.</p> <p>Working, learning and doing business together makes us more resilient and innovative.</p> <p>By interacting with each other, we realise how valuable diversity is in our continent.</p> <p>Cultural, science and education networks enrich our lives.</p> <p>Our connections with the ecosystems that we live in help us to become more sensitive to our environment.</p> <p>Thanks to our networks, we can and will build a prosperous future for all.</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>Different types of networks are represented on each banknote, starting with infrastructure and physical networks before moving on to social, cultural and knowledge networks.</p> <p>€5 – Transportation networks: the networks that carry people and goods Front: roads, train tracks and flights, etc. Back: sustainable transportation</p> <p>€10 – Telecommunication networks: the networks that carry information and connect people and businesses Front: telecommunication towers and satellites, etc. Back: blue transition</p> <p>€20 – Energy networks: the networks that carry the energy we need Front: energy towers Back: renewable energy and the green transition</p> <p>€50 – Knowledge and science networks: the networks through which knowledge and science are shared Front: scientists, researchers Back: tree of knowledge/learning</p> <p>€100 – Environmental networks: networks that connect us to our environment Front: human and natural systems Back: green transition – sustainable future</p> <p>€200 – Cultural and social networks: the networks we use to share our culture; the networks where we belong Front: culture wheel – people sharing ideas and opinions and learning from each other Back: diversity</p>
Additional comments	When all the euro banknotes are put together, they create an image of the euro symbol, with a reference to the economic and monetary network and the digital euro

Proposal 2

Name	Nuria Oliver
Theme 2	“The Nature of Values, the Value of Nature” Or “European Values, naturally”
Description	<p>The fundamental EU values are those “common to the EU countries in a society in which inclusion, tolerance, justice, solidarity and non-discrimination prevail”. They are human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law, and human rights.</p> <p>These fundamental values are defined in the Treaty of Lisbon and are values that are shared by all Member States.</p> <p>This theme was one of the themes preferred by the focus groups and was also one of the original themes I had proposed.</p> <p>With this theme we represent the EU values using scenes from nature to evoke an additional fundamental value in Europe: sustainability and respect not only towards other human beings but also towards our ecosystems.</p> <p>Nature was also one of the preferred themes identified by the focus groups.</p>
Story	<p>At a historic moment of increased levels of Euroscepticism and the polarisation of our societies, it is important to reflect and cherish the European values that distinguish this region of the world and unite us all. These values were proposed and implemented first in Europe and North America, where Europeans emigrated, and they shape our European society. They transcend national or state identity and promote European integration. Moreover, our values provide a basis for the economic, political, and societal policies and rules applied across Europe.</p> <p>Therefore, today more than ever we should know, appreciate, and cherish our values. When a society lacks awareness of its values, it has difficulties preserving the foundation of its own social structure, risking fragmentation and conflict. This is why it is so important to bring our European values to the forefront, to the hands and pockets of all Europeans.</p> <p>The theme of European values is represented using scenes from nature to highlight the importance of an additional value: sustainability and respect for our planet.</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>Each euro banknote represents one European value illustrated through different natural scenes.</p> <p>€5 – Freedom Freedom of movement, thoughts, religion, assembly, expression and information. Front: birds flying freely in the sky Back: people of all ages feeling free</p> <p>€10 – Human dignity Human dignity is inviolable. It must be respected, protected and constitutes the basis of fundamental rights. Front: European-inspired mountains – the summits of dignity Back: a baby hand and an old hand</p> <p>€20 – Democracy Representative democracy: EU citizens have the right to stand as a candidate and vote in their country of residence or origin. Front: sandy beach and the sea. Every grain of sand and every drop of water matter, just as every citizen counts. Back: people together raising hands</p> <p>€50 – Equality Equal rights, equal pay, gender equality Front: forest scene with trees; the trees seem equal, yet they are different and contribute equally to the forest Back: tree of diversity</p> <p>€100 – Rule of law Law and justice are applied by an independent judiciary Front: path of a river towards the sea Back: Lady Justice</p> <p>€200: Human rights Right to be free from discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, race, ethnic origin, religion, beliefs, disability and age. Right to the protection of personal data and right to access to justice Front: diverse flowers as diverse societies produce a beautiful bouquet. Human rights are necessary for a society to blossom. Back: human rights symbol, the rights of the planet – green transition</p>
Additional comments	<p>These themes (European values and nature) were proposed in the focus groups.</p> <p>Guided and united by our values, we are and will be able to build a prosperous and sustainable future for all.</p>

France

Proposal 1

Name	Stéphane Distinguin
Theme 1	Food/European recipes
Description	<p>Food is a big part of popular culture, European distinction and global acknowledgement.</p> <p>Food is extremely diverse, depending on regions and tastes, and sparks curiosity: it is one of the very rare topics that inspire national pride and shared xenophilia.</p> <p>Food is a matter of sense and will be magnified by visual artists.</p>
Story	<p>Food is a symbol of sharing and prosperity, an area of popular culture that can begin in each European household and spread to the whole world.</p> <p>Food is an allegory of European construction and fertile diversity.</p> <p>Food is just like the euro – one of the best ways to share among countries and bring down borders, while respecting local cultures and specificities.</p>
Associated motifs/images	Meals, ingredients, paintings, drawings, either classical from museums/national collections or new creations
Additional comments	<p>Food is at the convergence of culture and emotion, it may be one of the best possible answers to the ECB's request for proposal.</p> <p>It is a warm and sensitive option to replace the current somewhat cold and conceptual theme (gateways, windows and bridges).</p> <p>Less subject to controversy than people, especially at the level of the 19 countries.</p> <p>Six meals could cover the theme and make it both adopted and attractive.</p>

Proposal 2

Name	Stéphane Distinguin
Theme 2	Nature in Europe (climates, seas or rivers)
Description	<p>As confirmed by recent surveys and focus groups with different participants (in terms of age and countries), it all comes down to nature: identity, prosperity, (bio)diversity and the environment. Artwork too.</p> <p>19 countries offer an amazing amount of natural diversity, contemplation and preservation.</p> <p>Our banknotes are a great way to promote and support European nature.</p>
Story	<p>Europe is known for its long history and sophistication (culture, industries, politics), but it views nature as its most valuable resource and makes it a subject of pride and protection for all Europeans and a treasure to share with the rest of the world.</p> <p>Europe is a very diverse continent, and nature and humans have crafted a unique civilisation and community of landscapes, countries, cities and monuments. But, now more than ever, nature is a matter of unity.</p> <p>Even if landscapes can be identified, when compared with the current theme, they will not be as controversial as people or monuments.</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>Landscapes, climates (e.g. four climates: subarctic, Mediterranean, oceanic and continental), biodiversity and water.</p> <p>Mountains and/or rivers (shared by a strict minimum of two euro area countries), or seas. There are six seas (for 19 countries): Baltic Sea, North Sea, Atlantic Ocean, Mediterranean Sea, Adriatic Sea, Aegean Sea.</p> <p>Water is a common sub-theme for all these motifs. Water is indeed a symbol of European values: water in its diversity goes beyond borders, water has different states of matter and its various forms are always under transformation. Water in nature can take the form of a wild stream coming down the mountain or a river that crosses historical sites and landscapes.</p>
Additional comments	

Italy

Proposal 1

Name	Fabio Beltram
Theme 1	Europe's Legacy in the World
Description	<p>Thanks in large part to the continued exchange of people and ideas over the past centuries, Europeans have developed an impressive set of concepts, techniques and methods that have profoundly influenced the life of mankind across the world.</p> <p>Examples include the development of the scientific method, of perspective in figurative art, of the tonal system in music, of modern (quantum) physics, and radio communication.</p> <p>These achievements can be easily represented on paper and can help reinforce "European pride" internally and continental prestige abroad. In some cases portraits could also be used together with more specific imagery.</p>
Story	<p>Easy narrative here: Europe has existed as a cultural entity for centuries and has been the birthplace of many innovations that shaped the world as it is today. Free movement in the continent and profound cultural exchange – even while borders changed – were instrumental in giving this role to Europe at the global level, and today the EU is reinforcing these values.</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>Each of the specific concepts chosen lends itself to an image, and in some cases portraits could also be added. Perspective is the most obvious, but music is very straightforward as well. The scientific method could be represented by the early experiments on gravity, and radio communication could include waves and portraits (Hertz, Tesla, Marconi). These different elements could be used in the different denominations of the series in order to give unity of theme while maintaining specificity for each note.</p>
Additional comments	

Proposal 2

Name	Fabio Beltram
Theme 2	The European Union: its institutions and values
Description	<p>The European Union is "young" compared with the average existence of its Member States. Consequently, while citizens have a sense of belonging to their country, many of them have not fully realised they are part of a bigger idea, and that there is another entity greatly influencing their life and to which they have profound cultural and ethical links (such as through democracy, justice, and the environment). The euro is certainly the most visible proof of the impact of this newer layer, and the notes could be used as a tangible reminder of the EU and its institutions. Institutions could be easily represented by artistic sketches symbolising their function, or their main seat. In some cases even portraits of key figures could be inserted.</p>
Story	<p>Banknotes can be a daily reminder that we are part of the EU, and that the EU expresses through its institutions all the values that make us European (e.g. justice, democracy) and also has a profound impact on our lives (through the ECB, the European Commission, and the different agencies that greatly influence our health and food, among other things).</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>Each banknote can be a reminder of one way in which the EU has an impact on our everyday life. The six denominations can be used to represent:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EU Parliament: schema of the hemicycle, portrait of a President 2. European Commission: the main seat 3. ECB: very iconic building 4. Court of Justice: emphasis on the symbolic aspect of justice and human rights 5. Court of Auditors: as a symbol of the fight against corruption 6. European Agencies: merging a few of the important functions performed (health, environment, etc.)
Additional comments	<p>This proposal builds on Section 4.3.1.3.1 – Monument and landmark motifs of the Qualitative study on new themes for euro banknotes</p>

Cyprus

Proposal 1

Name	Demetrios Michaelides
Theme 1	The Universal Impact of European Architecture
Description	<p>Some of us may be in everyday contact with one or more forms of artistic creation. However, all of us are directly connected to architecture 24 hours a day. We live in it, we pray in it, we enjoy ourselves in it, and so on.</p> <p>Architecture hosts practically every human activity. Temples in ancient civilisations were the houses of the gods, and for these gods they created the most magnificent buildings of antiquity – a tradition continued by all cultures and religions that came after. In parallel, architects also created splendid villas and palaces to satisfy human vanity – as a show of wealth but also as an exhibition of good taste and of keeping up with the latest trends. These buildings became hosts of the best of what sculpture, painting and the creative arts had to offer. Therefore, architecture, more than other form of art, embodies the pinnacle of culture.</p> <p>Among European architects some stand out, either because they reached a level of near-perfection for their time, or because they were innovators who adopted new approaches to their métier. These pioneers influenced future generations of architects, within Europe and beyond, and my proposal aims to celebrate them. The work of these architects (irrespective of their country of origin) has become emblematic of European culture, and every European identifies with it. Equally important is that, for an outsider, for somebody who is not from Europe, these buildings are uniquely European – they characterise, and are directly associated with, European culture.</p> <p>The following architects could be featured:</p> <p>€5 – Iktinos and Kallikrates (Greece) €10 – Marcus Vitruvius Pollio (Italy) €20 – Filippo Brunelleschi (Italy) €50 – François Mansart (France) €100 – Antoni Gaudí (Spain) €200 – Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (Germany)</p>
Story	There is no story as such, but the message is clear and very easy to follow: here are architects and their emblematic buildings that are uniquely European and the product of a common European cultural background.
Associated motifs/images	Portrait of a given architect on the obverse, together with a realistic or schematic rendering of one of their buildings (or a detail them) or of another image that can be associated with them.
Additional comments	The above selection of architects for each denomination is a random proposal and was chosen to give a set of diachronic examples, starting in antiquity and ending in the 20th century. It should be noted that living architects have been excluded for obvious reasons. The selection also aimed at including architects from as many European countries as possible – although, I would stress that the “value” and the creations of these personalities transcend national boundaries. They can be redistributed or even substituted by other figures, as there are many more to choose from.

Proposal 2

Name	Demetrios Michaelides
Theme 2	Women – protagonists in European and World Culture
Description	<p>Through the ages, social restrictions as well as sexual and gender biases have prevented women from playing the role they could and should play in European science and culture. Despite these constraints, many women managed to break the barriers and become luminaries of European civilisation. Today, as the role of women has taken a new and positive turn, it is our duty to remember some of these pioneers and give them the recognition they deserve.</p> <p>As these personalities come from specific countries, it is inevitable that, if one wanted to, one could find a national bias in the theme. However, these women's accomplishments transcend national barriers and have influenced European and global culture more broadly.</p> <p>Through these important figures and their achievements, the theme emphasises our common European cultural heritage, and also sends an eloquent message to the world on where Europe stands with regard to equality and women's rights.</p> <p>Suggested personalities:</p> <p>€5 – Sappho (Greece)</p> <p>€10 – Hildegard von Bingen (Germany)</p> <p>€20 – Elise Meitner (Austria)</p> <p>€50 – Maria Montessori (Italy)</p> <p>€100 – Simone de Beauvoir (France)</p> <p>€200 – Marie Curie (Poland/France)</p>
Story	The story is simple and easy to understand: it is the European woman's contribution to science and culture, the fruits of which are reaped and appreciated worldwide and provide a foundation for the modern world.
Associated motifs/images	The portraits of these figures must be on the front. Portraits have eyes, and eyes communicate directly with the observer. Anything else that can be associated with the given personality can appear on the reverse. This could be a motto, a very short musical or literary excerpt, or another appropriate element which, with the right artistic/designer treatment, can play a decorative role.
Additional comments	<p>The above selection of women for each denomination is a random proposal and was chosen to represent as many European countries as possible, although the value of these personalities transcends national boundaries. They can be redistributed or even substituted by other figures, such as Sophie Germain, Nadia Boulanger, Clara Schumann or Berthe Morisot.</p> <p>It should be noted that (as in the current example) the selection should avoid including female politicians, religious figures and artists/actors. One exception is Hildegard von Bingen, who was an abbess, but her inclusion here is unrelated to that role.</p>

Latvia

Proposal 1

Name	Ieva Zībārte
Theme 1	Food
Description	Food is a theme that brings together each European at least three times a day. We recognise countries, regions and its people by food. We eat when we celebrate and we eat when we are sad, when we are all together and when we are alone. Food is the most inclusive subject, it creates emotions, memories and unites the past with the future. Food production is also an important business, a political debate and recently an important topic in the context of the climate crisis. When one talks about food, it can be a story rooted in folklore, science, business, transportation, health, development, social issues and any other topic of our daily life.
Story	The story of this theme can have various narratives from “our daily bread” to climate awareness. Food creates a sense of belonging and acts as a gateway to a good conversation. Food is also at the heart of the European Green Deal with the Farm to Fork Strategy aiming to make food systems fair, healthy and environmentally friendly.
Associated motifs/images	The theme can be represented by staple plant-based foods found in any national/traditional cuisine of European countries and regions, as well as immigrant, expat and other communities living in Europe: vegetables (onions, carrots, cabbage, beans, peas), fruit (apples, pears, plums, peaches), grain (bread, beer, pancakes), grapes (wine and champagne), herbs (camomile, peppermint, basil) etc. The motifs on the banknotes can be arranged according to the climate regions of Europe.
Additional comments	

Proposal 2

Name	Ieva Zībārte
Theme 2	Nature – Seasons
Description	Europe is known as a place where the four seasons can be observed and admired at their best. Seasons divide the year into smaller fractions and influence our life. We celebrate seasons, we promote tourism based on seasons and we live and work according to them.
Story	The story of this theme can have various narratives, from changing landscapes and the cyclicity of life to climate awareness. Nature through the prism of the seasons is a poetic yet fundamental theme that channels continuity and suggests the idea of “spring always comes after winter”.
Associated motifs/images	The theme can be beautifully depicted by different landscapes in each season. Spring – blooming trees, flowers, water streams, edible plants, birch sap. Summer – blue sky, roses, grass, gardens, seas, rivers, beaches, strawberries. Autumn – golden landscapes, harvest, colourful leaves, mushrooms, nuts. Winter – forests, northern lights, snowflakes, cranberries, icicles, Alpine landscapes. Summer/ winter solstice – midsummer meadow, bonfire, festival, pines and fir trees.
Additional comments	

Lithuania

Proposal 1

Name	Marija Marcelionytė-Paliukė
Theme 1	Wild birds
Description	<p>I suggest rethinking the future and its main determiners through birds: their life cycle, migration challenges, nesting, raising children, the dangers of irresponsible human activities, on the one hand, and their friendship, neighbourliness, inherent freedom, nature and science, on the other.</p> <p>I believe that fundamental European values are worthless without commitments and responsibilities for the future. And humans are physical beings who cannot relate to abstract truths, no matter how good and meaningful they may be. But we are able to understand, empathise, care for and love what we know, what accompanies us from childhood to advanced old age, something in which we see a reflection of our own being.</p> <p>The concept of the topic is based on The Birds Directive, which is the oldest piece of EU legislation on the environment and one of its cornerstones. Amended in 2009, it became Directive 2009/147/EC. The Birds Directive aims to protect all of the 500 wild bird species naturally occurring in the EU. The Birds Directive is an excellent example of the shared responsibility and cooperation of the 27 EU Member States.</p> <p>European concepts, diversity of nations, beauty and variable of nature can be represented through the images of this theme in a very impressive graphical way. It's a very beautiful theme visually.</p> <p>Home with a future dimension: home is a place (physical and mental) where it is safe to raise a family.</p> <p>Birds' migration routes/maps would stimulate thoughts about people/nations, migration aspects, shared responsibility and cooperation.</p> <p>Birds represent freedom and the future but with a feeling of belonging to something bigger than you.</p> <p>Community values: only the joint efforts of mankind can be effective. Everyone's contribution is important.</p> <p>Future with commitment.</p> <p>This theme presupposes talking about humanity and its values, not by depicting a specific person, but through the life cycle and challenges of birds.</p> <p>The theme brings together a lot of topics and layers: nature (seasons, waters, forests, meadows, mountains, swamps), human behaviour, ecological aspects, collaboration and community, climate change, agriculture, folklore, the future, freedom and no borders.</p>
Story	<p>Europe is home to more than 500 wild bird species. Birds have always lived near humans, so they have received interesting reviews for their appearance, their unusual voice, and ultimately their distinctive behaviour. Centuries of observing birds have allowed humans to learn about the patterns of their behaviour and to link them to changes in the weather. In the long run, the peculiarities of birds' behaviour have also begun to be treated as certain signs for the future. For this purpose, the bird's actions and environment were closely monitored, such as their movement, singing, chosen landing site, and the features of their nests. Over the centuries, birds have acquired a certain cultural value in every nation. The attitude of the European citizens towards birds is broadly similar.</p> <p>Birds do not recognise borders. The contemporary world is a world without borders.</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>€5 – Skylark, early spring, lands</p> <p>Background/other side: cultivated fields, ploughing, early spring, fields, soil, earth, furrow, tillage, landscape, spring nature, agriculture. The picture of agriculture is the same across Europe, no further explanation is needed.</p> <p>The skylark is the prophet of spring (24 February is Skylark Day). €5 is a start. According to the behaviour of the skylark on this day it is possible to know what type of spring and summer await. This bird is an indicator of the state of the soil and the environment. If aggressive farming is carried out, the natural ecological balance is disrupted and this bird will leave the area.</p> <p>€10 – Cuckoo, summer, woods</p> <p>Background/other side: beautiful summer landscapes, trees, forests, lush fields. (Cuckoo never lands on the ground, it is always on top of the trees.)</p> <p>A colourful bird, with character. Have (€10) in your pocket when the cuckoo sings and you will be rich all year round.</p> <p>The cuckoo features a lot in folk songs and fairy tales. It is a part of a lot of small folklore. It represents a very beautiful connection between folk wisdom and the modern world.</p> <p>N.B. This banknote could be used to represent the ECB's financial guarantee and security.</p> <p>€20 – Tern, waters</p> <p>Background/other side: oceans, seas, rivers, lakes, boats, light houses, fishing.</p> <p>Terns hatch eggs in colonies, a reference to community and family. They feed each other with fish – a reference to concern and the extension of the family, life. The number 20 is an even number, which conceptually is a very suitable number for the pair.</p> <p>€50 – Eagle owl or long-eared owl, winter, mountains.</p> <p>Background/other side: mountains, untouched forests, woods (nature where there are idyllic protected areas, where only natural processes take place).</p> <p>This bird is a symbol of mind, wisdom, power and peace. €50 is the most common denomination – humanity seeks wisdom, knowledge, hopes for wise solutions.</p> <p>€100 – White stork, autumn, folklore.</p> <p>Background/other side: stork nests, homesteads, migration maps, images from a bird's eye view, landscapes, birds flying out for the winter.</p>

	<p>Everybody knows what a stork looks like from fairy tales, films, animations, and more. €100 is the most familiar high-value banknote for many people. Everybody, young and old, can find reference to a stork (storks bring newborns – this is usually the very first explanation given to a child of where children come from).</p> <p>24 August is Stork Day. This day is reminiscent of autumn. From this point on, the days get shorter, and the nights are cold and foggy. Storks have long been believed to bring happiness and protect from lightning, fire and hail.</p> <p>€200 – Hooper or European roller, preservation.</p> <p>Background/other side: bird watching, ringing, traditional not cultivated landscapes, protection of nature.</p> <p>Rare birds, like a €200 banknote in human hands. Large sums circulate digitally.</p> <p>Extremely protected. Owing to human activities, such as their illegal shooting in Indonesia, these birds do not return to Europe and do not reproduce, also as a result of the expansion of aggressive agriculture, the destruction of traditional villages and the natural lifestyle. The European roller has already disappeared in Spain, Portugal, Romania, Finland and Estonia, for example.</p>
Additional comments	<p>European dimension – the Bird Directive seeks to emphasise that wild birds, most of which are migratory birds, are a common EU national asset and that cross-border cooperation is essential for their effective protection.</p> <p>Inclusive – this topic has no age group; it is absolutely universal to everyone, from young to old.</p> <p>Human/emotional – caring for others, smaller ones whose well-being and future depend on the everyday behaviour, attitudes and activities of humans.</p> <p>Acceptable – birds = the future. The future is secured when all of humanity takes responsibility for its actions and works together for the future in all areas.</p> <p>Legible – the attitude of the people of Europe towards birds is more or less similar. Birds have always lived near humans. Birds are mentioned in folk songs, fairy tales and they have deep roots in each nation's history.</p> <p>Attractive – enormously attractive! 500 species – what a magical mix of colour, feathers, patterns, a variety of body silhouettes, wing shapes. This theme is particularly conducive to conveying the diversity and beauty of nature: different seasons – spring, summer, autumn, winter; diversity of EU landscapes – rivers, lakes, seas, swamps, forests, meadows, mountains seasons; and the power of human concern – nature protection, research, the latest technological achievements.</p> <p>Timeless – ensuring an uninterrupted life cycle secures the future, gives hope, makes life meaningful. Wild birds are common national asset. Only the joint efforts of mankind will be effective.</p>

Luxembourg

Proposal 1

Name	Patrick Sanavia
Theme 1	Landscapes, natural monuments and nature to preserve
Description	<p>The European territory offers magnificent landscapes and natural sights that give our continent a strong identity. Some people live next to these natural monuments. Most Europeans can reach and discover these wonderful places in a couple of hours. Surrounded by nature, Europeans like to spend their holiday in it, for example on hiking tours accompanied by professional guides to learn more about the region. People from the cities go to nature to breathe and to show to their children that a different way of life is possible.</p> <p>A lot of these beautiful, majestic places are in danger. As part of a very sensitive ecosystem, some natural monuments will lose their integrity because glaciers are melting, water is rising, soils are moving, and vegetation is changing. We know the reason for that, and we know what we have to do.</p> <p>The point would be to show the splendour of the great and sensitive nature of Europe through easily recognisable examples.</p>
Story	<p>Nature and its monuments often created the borders between European countries and formed them in a certain way. Landscapes separate different countries but also unite some parts of them.</p> <p>We know how to preserve these much-loved and much-needed landscapes, as we need good air and fresh water. By protecting these natural monuments, we protect our climate and our health.</p>
Associated motifs/images	Mont Blanc Massif, Brèche de Roland, the Matterhorn, fjords, forests, rivers, etc.
Additional comments	

Proposal 2

Name	Patrick Sanavia
Theme 2	Men, Women and Architecture making Europe
Description	<p>Starting with Benelux, then the European Community and finally the European Union, the making of political Europe was possible because a few outstanding personalities had ambition and gave their best. More than three generations after these pioneers, a tribute should be paid to them in a place where people are used to seeing portraits.</p> <p>These portraits could be combined with some buildings where the European institutions have their seat, and which represent some interesting architecture of the last 30 years. In this way, the "architects of Europe" are closely related to the most important buildings housing the daily work of the European Union.</p>
Story	<p>The European Union came to be thanks to the political talent and skill of certain men and women. These people had not only a vision, but also the energy translate it into concrete results. After World War II, they had the strong conviction that greater collaboration between countries could prevent other conflicts in the future. We should remember these individuals and explain their accomplishments to the younger generation.</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>Robert Schuman, Jean Monnet, Walter Hallstein, Alcide de Gasperi, Paul-Henri Spaak, Konrad Adenauer, Joseph Bech, Pierre Werner and Simone Veil. European Parliament in Brussels and Strasbourg, Berlaymont in Brussels, Court of Justice and European Investment Bank in Luxembourg, the ECB in Frankfurt.</p>
Additional comments	

Malta

Proposal 1

Name	Emanuel Buttigieg
Theme 1	<p>"The hands that build Europe"</p> <p>Individual sub-themes for each denomination:</p> <p>€5 – The hands that carve human dignity</p> <p>€10 – The hands that forge our freedoms</p> <p>€20 – The hands that make us equal</p> <p>€50 – The hands that encourage solidarity</p> <p>€100 – The hands that fight for citizens' rights</p> <p>€200 – The hands that ensure justice</p>
Description	<p>Some years ago, while in Berlin, I visited the Bode Museum and my imagination was captured by a detail from a sculpture of a woman: her hands. They tell a tale of labour, age, and relationships. This is what inspired my theme: hands, "The hands that build Europe".</p> <p>In a sense, there is nothing more obvious than representing hands on banknotes, which are ultimately held in hands. If "hands" becomes the theme of the new euro notes, it could be a very creative seed from which a variety of representations could bloom. There is space to capture work, study and leisure activities. They can literally bring the human touch – and be diverse – while allowing for a bit of ambiguity since we would only have the hands showing, rather than full representations of people.</p> <p>If there is one thing that we – people who have experienced the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic – have grown to appreciate, it is how much we miss a good handshake or a hug, both of which require hands.</p>
Story	<p>Hands have built Europe: its physical infrastructure, its artistic heritage, its literature, and other things. Hands build, weave, heal, teach, guide, and so much more.</p> <p>It is a people-centred, rather than country-centred story, and it has the potential to be both time-specific (the way certain representations and motifs will be depicted can capture the spirit of our time, like a postcard from the 2020s) and timeless (hands have and will always be expressers of human emotions).</p> <p>Let us celebrate the hands that have built Europe, and continue to do so every day, in so many ways.</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>The organisation of the motifs/images on each banknote is inspired by the six chapters (denoted by the underlined words in the list below) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Each chapter is subdivided into a number of articles. It would be challenging to include a representation of each article, so the suggested motifs/images attempt to capture as broad a representation of each chapter as possible.</p> <p>€5 – The hands that carve human dignity Represented via an image of hands with broken shackles and the sun shining through, symbolising the right to a dignified life.</p> <p>€10 – The hands that forge our freedoms Represented through hands studying and at work.</p> <p>€20 – The hands that make us equal Represented through the hand of a child and an elderly person reaching out to each other, alongside the sign language interpretation symbol for disability.</p> <p>€50 – The hands that encourage solidarity The focus here is on work, health, and the environment. There can be a hand administering a vaccine or a hand planting a tree.</p> <p>€100 – The hands that fight for citizens' rights Represented through hands holding a ballot paper and a hand releasing a dove, symbolising freedom of movement and peace.</p> <p>€200 – The hands that ensure justice Represented through a hand holding the scales of justice.</p>
Additional comments	<p>(1) Banknotes that form a puzzle.</p> <p>A further possibility related to the theme of "hands" could be to have a hologram (which could also serve as a further security feature) of a handshake spread across the six banknotes, which one can see by placing the six notes together.</p> <p>(2) The two sides of the banknotes.</p> <p>One point from the preliminary findings from the focus groups is the need for the banknotes not to be cluttered. There was also an express interest in retaining the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU flag • Euro symbol • Name of the currency • Map of Europe <p>Therefore, my suggestion would be to have a "creative" side featuring "The hands that build Europe", and a "practical" side comprising just the EU flag, the euro symbol, the name of the currency, and the map of Europe.</p>

In addition, and as a way to create a link between the two sides of the banknotes, one could have the six key words inspired by the six chapters of the Charter – dignity, freedoms, equality, solidarity, citizens' rights and justice – included on this side, using the same alphabets used to write the name of the currency. The disadvantage of doing this would be that it could make it more cluttered.

(3) "Famous hands"

Drawing on some of the points made during the meeting in Amsterdam, including by Costas Varotsos, namely the importance of having some very visually recognisable European icons on the banknotes, I would suggest including some such iconic representations, such as the well-known details from Michelangelo's The Creation of Adam, such the hand of Adam and the hand of God, or Mona Lisa's folded arms in Da Vinci's painting.

The use of such images, alongside more contemporary representations, would bring in an element of heritage, while still drawing out the six core values of the European Union. I would not suggest having all the images come from historical or famous sources, but rather would seek a balance between old and new.

Proposal 2

Name	Emanuel Buttigieg
Theme 2	<p>"We are Europe"</p> <p>Individual sub-themes for each denomination:</p> <p>€5 – Portraits and freedoms</p> <p>€10 – Monuments and citizens' rights</p> <p>€20 – European values and dignity</p> <p>€50 – Science, health and equality</p> <p>€100 – Nature, climate change and solidarity</p> <p>€200 – Art and justice</p>
Description	<p>This proposal is centred around the theme "We are Europe". It is based on reflections drawn from the qualitative study on new themes for euro banknotes – i.e. the direct feedback from citizens, ideas from the TAG meeting in Amsterdam on 21 April 2022, the thoughts of some of my students at the University of Malta – and builds on my first suggested theme, "The hands that build Europe". Another factor that has influenced my theme is data from the ECB outlining the quantity of banknotes in circulation: the €50 note has the widest circulation, followed by €20, €100, €10, €5 and €200.</p> <p>The order in terms of quantity in circulation is as follows:</p> <p>€50 – Science, health and equality</p> <p>€20 – European values and dignity</p> <p>€100 – Nature, climate change and solidarity</p> <p>€10 – Monuments and citizens' rights</p> <p>€5 – Portraits and freedoms</p> <p>€200 – Art and justice</p>
Story	<p>The story is about those elements which, through their diversity, come together to make us European. The starting point is the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, thereby promoting the theme of European values which will underwrite the whole series. At the same time, the other five themes – nature, monuments, portraits, science and art – will also be used to express these values.</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>"We are Europe" offers a wonderful array of visual possibilities – there can be a mixture of well-known existing images alongside new and innovative representations, possibly with an anime feel to them. €50 – Science, health and equality</p> <p>The key value to be underlined here would be equality, shown through the lens of science and with a particular emphasis on healthcare and the importance of adequate access to affordable, ideally free, healthcare for all. Vaccination is a fundamental aspect in helping humanity combat all types of disease. A physician taking the pulse of a patient is a routine medical procedure, but at the same time, feeling someone's pulse has traditionally had symbolic meaning of someone taking care of another, leading them towards a state of well-being.</p> <p>€20 – European values and dignity</p> <p>The key value to be underlined here would be dignity, depicted through some famous European hands that are classic images in their own right and have inspired many creative manifestations, that is, the well-known details of the hand of God and the hand of Adam from Michelangelo's The Creation of Adam and Mona Lisa's folded arms in Da Vinci's painting – the essence of dignity.</p> <p>€100 – Nature, climate change and solidarity</p> <p>The key value to be underlined here would be solidarity, shown through the lens of nature and with a particular emphasis on climate change and the importance of solidarity between all people across the globe. As an example, one could think of artist Lorenzo Quinn's installation of a monumental sculpture for the 2017 Venice Biennale. Titled "Support", the piece depicts a pair of gigantic hands rising from the water to support the sides of the Ca' Sagredo Hotel, a visual statement of the impact of climate change and rising sea levels on the historic city.</p> <p>€10 – Monuments and citizens' rights</p> <p>The key value to be underlined here would be citizens' rights, shown through the lens of monuments. The key monument to be depicted would be the hemicycle of the European Parliament building in Brussels, juxtaposed with a hand voting.</p> <p>€5 – Portraits and freedoms</p> <p>The key value to be underlined here would be freedoms, shown through the lens of portraits and with the hands of two figures represented: Beethoven, as the composer of the "Ode to Joy", which has become the anthem of the EU; and the hands of a Roman woman with wax tablets and stylus, and a fresco from Pompeii, both emphasising the celebration of life.</p> <p>€200 – Art and justice</p> <p>The key value to be underlined here would be justice, shown through the lens of art. Given that the €200 banknote is the highest-value note in the current and future series (excluding the €500), it can be used to carry a message about the importance of justice and how there can be no justice without fighting corruption. A representation of Mammon, the god of worldliness, can very aptly carry this message. This can either be a famous painting (such as Evelyn de Morgan's The worship of Mammon) or a modern take on it (such as Mammon from the anime series Obey Me).</p>

**Additional
comments**

(1) Banknotes that form a puzzle.

A further possibility related to the "We are Europe" theme would be to have a hologram (which could also serve as a further security feature) of the ring of stars across the six banknotes, which one can see by placing the six banknotes together.

(2) The two sides of the banknotes.

One point from the preliminary findings from the focus groups is the need for the banknotes not to be cluttered. There was also an express interest in retaining the following:

- EU flag
- Euro symbol
- Name of the currency
- Map of Europe

Therefore, my suggestion would be to have a "creative" side featuring "The hands that build Europe", and a "practical" side comprising just the EU flag, the euro symbol, the name of the currency, and the map of Europe.

In addition to these, and as a way to create a link between the two sides of the banknotes, one could have the six key words inspired by the six chapters of the Charter – dignity, freedoms, equality, solidarity, citizens' rights and justice – included on this side, using the same three scripts used to write the name of the currency. The drawback would be that it could make the banknote more cluttered.

Netherlands

Proposal 1

Name	Alice Twemlow
Theme 1	Enduring European Folktales – from Myths to the Metaverse
Description	<p>This theme is a reinterpretation of a selection of Europe’s most endearing and enduring myths and folktales, mixed together in new combinations and given a contemporary twist.</p> <p>It allows for the creation of a beautiful series of banknotes with depictions of archetypal characters, fantastical creatures, dramatic scenes of tension and conflict, domestic objects and tools, foods, and natural and architectural settings.</p>
Story	<p>European folktales transcend time and space.</p> <p>This theme celebrates the continent’s most compelling and enduring myths and folk tales as a way to highlight contemporary understandings of EU values, but also to link the citizens and ideals of Europe’s ancient past to its exciting future.</p> <p>From the megalithic era to the metaverse, folk tales are constantly being reinterpreted, but their core values are universal and their motifs are timeless.</p> <p>Folktales are associated with ethnic and cultural groups, oikotypes, and regions that extend across national borders (Catalan, Baltic, Alpine, Slavic etc.). For example, The Emperor’s New Clothes is most famous from its 1837 telling by Hans Christian Andersen, from Denmark, but it is based on older tales from medieval Spain and ancient Greece. Many of Europe’s folktales originate in historical exchanges with other parts of the world. They travel across borders and connect Europe to the rest of the world.</p> <p>Such a set of notes will (i) help welcome a future European community made up of migrants and post-national citizens, a population in flux and learning from one another; (ii) make an emotional connection, through their careful representation of human and animal features; and (iii) encourage a new kind of engagement with euro banknotes and stimulate discussion about European values through their detail and layers of meaning.</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>In developing a design brief for this theme, we can suggest that designers create a freestanding palette of elements (characters, creatures, objects, tools, aspects of natural or architectural settings). In designing each note, they can select from this palette and recombine the elements in ways that allow for interconnection between the tales, in reference to their migration across Europe and their openness to continuous reinterpretation over time.</p> <p>Additionally, if the full set of notes is assembled, the landscapes and stories can be seen to flow from one note to the next, just as they do in Europe.</p> <p>Examples of motifs and images:</p> <p>Characters (human and animal): Puss in Boots, Hansel and Gretel, Thumbelina, Br’er Rabbit, Ugly Duckling</p> <p>Creatures: mermaid, unicorn, dragon, dwarf, witch</p> <p>Objects, tools and food: cauldron, spinning wheel, knapsack, porridge, cheese, sweets</p> <p>Plants and trees: spruce, olive, rose, thorns</p> <p>Settings: forest, ice palace, mountains, sea</p> <p>These elements can be assembled in scenes of narrative tension where each of the six European values is pitted against its counterpart, since folk tales often explore binary oppositions:</p> <p>Human dignity (vs. pride)</p> <p>Freedom (vs. restraint/imprisonment)</p> <p>Democracy (vs. autocratic rule)</p> <p>Equality (vs. elitism and discrimination)</p> <p>Rule of law (vs. chaos and deceit)</p> <p>Human rights (vs. evil)</p> <p>As an example, the €100 note, which is recognised by its green tones, could be used to reimagine the tale of Eglé the Queen of Serpents. This tale, a variation of the Beauty and the Beast trope, features across the Balto-Slavic region, including the euro area countries Lithuania, Estonia, Finland and Latvia. The note could include:</p> <p>Boreal forest elements, specifically spruce and fir trees</p> <p>Interpretation of a grass snake shape-shifting into Žilvinas and of Eglé shape-shifting into a spruce tree (using the hologram effect of the security feature in the banknote)</p> <p>Other featured animals include: goose, sheep, cow, cuckoo</p> <p>Featured objects: spinning wheel, silk, iron shoes, pie</p>
Additional comments	<p>To enrich the design brief we could connect with experts in the study of myths and folklore as well as European heritage projects such as VAST (Values Across Space and Time), which is creating a digital map of the evolution of Grimm’s fairy tales across time (19th century to the present day) and space (Portugal, Greece, Italy, Cyprus and Slovenia), focusing on both the reception of the original versions and the national adaptations of each tale type. They can help identify the most prevalent or interesting elements.</p>

Proposal 2

Name	Alice Twemlow
Theme 2	Birds and Biomes
Description	<p>This theme celebrates and communicates the values of the European Union through loving portraits of a selection of Europe's birds.</p> <p>Biodiversity loss is a huge factor in the climate crisis that will reshape Europe in profound ways, even by the time these notes are in circulation. Our notes should address this. Bird populations in Europe are under threat and the diversity of species is declining. Scientists routinely use birds to gauge the health of ecosystems. Under the EU Birds Directive, all 460 species of wild bird are protected throughout their entire life cycle.</p> <p>Apart from being ethically appropriate, the theme of birds in relation to aspects of the European ecosystem allows for visually attractive and allegorical ways to communicate other EU values and EU priorities and to create emotional connection.</p> <p>Reasons to choose the theme:</p> <p>The theme makes a human/emotional connection</p> <p>The theme has the potential to make an emotional connection at the surface level through attractive design, through the use of birds' faces and eyes, and through its underlying conservation message (which is a more positive take on climate crisis). These notes can inform and inspire young people to identify birds and contribute to biodiversity conservation and climate resilience.</p> <p>The theme presents European Union values</p> <p>Birds and biomes can be framed in such a way as to inspire and educate and to highlight the EU's pivotal role in "environmental protection and the improvement of the quality of the environment" (Article 37 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union) and its commitment to be the first climate-neutral continent.</p> <p>Other EU values such as freedom of movement and absence of discrimination can be depicted allegorically.</p> <p>The theme is inclusive</p> <p>Nature and the ways it defines the European continent was the most-mentioned topic in the ECB's qualitative study on new themes. Specifically, it is described as neutral, unifying and borderless.</p> <p>Birds can be depicted in the context of their natural habitats, to put the emphasis on biogeographical regions that traverse national borders and unify us with one another and with nature.</p> <p>The theme is inclusive in the sense that no humans are excluded, and it allows for many aspects of nature and all biogeographical regions of Europe to be represented.</p> <p>The theme has the potential to be attractive</p> <p>Birds are innately colourful and famously beautiful. They offer great potential for aesthetically pleasing interpretations. And it is possible to make use of some of the printing techniques used for the security features, like foil printing, to represent iridescence of bird feathers and holograms to show dimensionality and movement of birds in flight.</p> <p>"Alongside expressing their preferences around themes, motifs and common design elements, participants were keen to emphasise that future banknotes should be colourful, vibrant and eye-catching".— Conclusion, ECB qualitative study on new themes</p>
Story	<p>Birds are collaborative, resilient, and inspiring in their freedom. Their behaviours can be used to represent European Union values and their beauty allows us to create an emotional connection with the users of euro banknotes and to raise awareness about declining biodiversity and Europe's world-leading efforts in conservation, especially with regard to wild birds.</p> <p>What if, after using these notes, European citizens starts to notice the birds and plants around them and the ways they are interconnected?</p> <p>What if they then learn about the EU's commitment to climate action and what they can do as individuals and communities to take care of birds, specifically, and to help mitigate a climate catastrophe, more generally?</p> <p>What if, through using these notes, climate and conflict migrants arriving in Europe or moving within Europe feel welcome to rebuild their nests in new habitats and thereby feel empowered to contribute to the daily life and economies of the European ecosystem?</p> <p>"Birds are free, and they don't know any borders between countries. They symbolise European unity. They visit all the countries they wish to." – interviewee, Estonia, 16-25, ECB qualitative study on new themes</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>In addition to the featured bird and its habitat, each note can incorporate other elements that help us to better understand the interconnected nature of our ecosystem: a representative plant or tree and cloud formation from that biogeographical region, the bird's migration routes, nesting habits, a description of its call, egg markings, its conservation status, its connection to humans or its role in a region's history and mythology.</p> <p>For example:</p> <p>€5 – grey</p> <p>Featured bird: Arctic tern</p> <p>Featured biome: Arctic tundra</p> <p>Featured plant: Cotton grass</p> <p>Other elements that could be included or interpreted by the designer: arctic terns mate for life and, in most cases, return to the same colony each year.</p> <p>The male and female both agree on a site for a nest and both will defend the site.</p>

	<p>Arctic terns hold the record for the longest migration of any animal in the world. Each year they fly from the Arctic Circle to the Antarctic Circle. They demonstrate great resilience.</p> <p>Biome: boreal forests, streams, ponds, lakes, estuaries, open ocean.</p> <p>Conservation issue: melting ice caps, reduction of tundra biome.</p> <p>Cotton grass is a common plant of the tundra biome. It has skinny leaves that look like grass. The stems grow to around 8-28 inches tall with 3-5 fluffy clusters of seeds on the top of each stem. These heads help carry the seeds through the wind for dispersal.</p> <p>EU countries represented: Denmark, Sweden.</p> <p>Euro area country represented: Finland.</p>
Additional comments	<p>People in the Netherlands fondly remember the 100 guilder note, designed by R.D. Oxenaar in 1981 and which featured a national bird, the Water Snipe. The note became commonly known as the Snipe.</p> <p>Costa Rica has notes made from fully recyclable polymer which feature scientific drawings by the Costa Rica Institute of Biodiversity. For example, the 20,000 colón note depicts a hummingbird in its ecosystem. The theme is also continued in the security features.</p>

Austria

Proposal 1

Name	Peter Aufreiter
Theme 1	EU values
Description	<p>Human dignity, freedom, equality, human rights, democracy and rule of law are the core values that form the basis for coexistence in the EU.</p> <p>Most people are happy and proud to be EU citizens. However, not very many know the common values and principles underlying the EU community.</p> <p>The presence of shared values strengthens our identity as Europeans.</p> <p>These values are timeless and young people identify with them.</p> <p>The big challenge with this topic is, of course, how to portray it graphically.</p>
Story	<p>The great European politician Robert Schuman said "Europe needs a soul, an ideal, and the political will to serve this ideal." The shared values are the soul of the EU, and the euro and its banknotes are an important part of that ideal – together they represent an essential part of our European identity.</p> <p>The six banknotes stand for the six core values of the EU. In that way, values become values.</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>€5 – Rule of law</p> <p>€10 – Democracy</p> <p>€20 – Human rights</p> <p>€50 – Equality</p> <p>€100 – Freedom</p> <p>€200 – Human dignity</p>
Additional comments	

Proposal 2

Name	Peter Aufreiter
Theme 2	EU institutions
Description	<p>Showing the most important EU institutions on the banknotes would be a way to strengthen EU citizens' feelings of identification with the EU as a whole, but also with the individual organisations.</p> <p>In addition, this theme would increase knowledge about the pillars of the EU and the values associated with them. The permanent presence of the institutions on the banknotes would help people to understand why each EU institution makes certain decisions and to be proud of the EU's democratic structures underpinning the rule of law.</p> <p>The buildings would be: European Parliament, European Commission, Court of Auditors, European Court of Justice, European Central Bank, and Council of the European Union.</p> <p>These could be represented by photographs or stylised images of the buildings and the symbols of the institutions.</p>
Story	Being exposed to EU institutions and their buildings on a daily basis also means interacting with the activities of the EU in a certain way. The links between the various EU institutions and the activities and decisions made by the EU become clearer.
Associated motifs/images	<p>€5 – European Central Bank</p> <p>€10 – Council of the European Union</p> <p>€20 – Court of Auditors</p> <p>€50 – European Court of Justice</p> <p>€100 – European Commission</p> <p>€200 – European Parliament</p>
Additional comments	<p>Qualitative study on new themes for euro banknotes, Section 4.3.1.3.1 – Monument and landmark motifs</p> <p>The buildings of the EU institutions: participants explained that these buildings functioned as a symbol of unity and connectedness for them because they represented the European Union and its shared values and objectives.</p>

Slovenia

Proposal 1

Name	Jana Arbeiter
Theme 1	"United in diversity" or "Unique in our Diversity"
Description	The motto of the EU perfectly describes citizens of the EU. The main idea of Theme 1 is to show that our common denominator – diversity – sets us apart from others. The EU as a sui generis (one of a kind) actor differs from countries or international organisations in the international community. Its uniqueness should therefore be celebrated and used as a symbol. It is important to encompass our unique and diverse character in the banknotes we use.
Story	What makes the EU unique? It is its people, its culture, its heritage and, most importantly, its diversity. What is common to every citizen of the EU? That we share different race, gender, language, age, religion, among many other things. We are united in diversity.
Associated motifs/images	<p>The European Union has 24 official languages. Why not to use one that is common to all of us? The language of symbols, with which we can illustrate common EU values.</p> <p>Use of different hands (at least three) on each banknote: wrinkled hands, baby/child hands, hands of a different race.</p> <p>Those three hands use sign language/hand symbols for common EU values (each used on a different banknote): human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law and human rights.</p>
Additional comments	

Proposal 2

Name	Jana Arbeiter
Theme 2	Live, breathe, sustain
Description	The EU is a very strong advocate of sustainable development. And one of the key pillars of sustainable development is the environment, where the EU is very active with its green initiatives, etc. Therefore, why not illustrate shared European nature (flora and fauna) on new euro banknotes? We need to protect our environment for future generations and ensure a sustainable future for many generations to come. That is why we not only need to do everything to protect it, we also need to cherish it.
Story	If we wish to ensure better, bigger and more successful development, we need to become more sustainable. We need to understand that we are guests on our continent, which needs to stay here for future generations. That is why, wisdom, intelligence, stability and courage are important when planning our future. We need to protect our environment for future generations and ensure a sustainable future for many generations to come. That is why we not only need to do everything to protect it, we also need to cherish it.
Associated motifs/images	<p>Illustration of:</p> <p>Freshwater (EU contains important freshwater ecosystems/rivers and lakes etc.) and animals (e.g. freshwater crab).</p> <p>The crab represents rebirth and rivers represent the birth and power of nature and fertility. Therefore we will reap what we sow – no water means no life.</p> <p>Forests (almost 40 % of the EU is covered with forests) and a typical animal (e.g. bear).</p> <p>Trees represent life and growth and the bear symbolises courage, possibility for improvement and evolution. Therefore, protecting forests is important if we wish to see future generations</p> <p>Alpine regions (maybe the highest European mountain) and animals (e.g. Alpine ibex)</p> <p>Mountains symbolise eternity, constancy and the ibex nobility and tenacity. These are all needed to implement sustainable development goals and preserve our environment for future generations.</p> <p>Arctic tundra and animals (e.g. snowy owl)</p> <p>Ice could represent stillness and the owl symbolises wisdom and intuition. It could be understood that wisdom should be used in order to understand that the environment should not be changed or exploited.</p> <p>Mediterranean and animals (e.g. bee)</p> <p>An important geographical region of the EU, the cradle of European culture, and the bee as a symbol of wisdom, birth and a literal key pollinator, which is vital for global food security.</p> <p>Oceans/sea and animals (e.g. fish from the North Sea, seals in Baltic Sea etc.)</p> <p>The ocean often symbolises the beginning of life on Earth and it should therefore be preserved, and fish represent intelligence – the understanding that we were not the first on the Earth and should treat it as if we are guests.</p>
Additional comments	

Finland

Proposal 1

Name	Maaria Wirkkala
Theme 1	NATURE – tree – trees – forest
Description	<p>The basis for this proposal is European nature and European values. They are central, indivisible and always current.</p> <p>One essential factor that allows European values to exist, breathe and survive is the preservation of nature.</p> <p>From the countless possible nature themes in this proposal, the focus is on trees, keeping in mind that trees are always part of a larger landscape.</p>
Story	<p>There has been research into the relationship between humans and trees/the forest. Researchers were surprised to find that so many people project their emotions through trees.</p> <p>There are strong spiritual and psychological feelings towards trees.</p> <p>Trees have been and will continue to be the source of inspiration for and subject of art.</p> <p>The tree of wisdom – The tree of life</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>A tree is an organism with several parts and elements: seeds, roots, fruit, leaves, trunks, growth rings, forests.</p> <p>A single tree creates a large biotope around it: there is symbiosis with mushrooms and feeding insects. There are even birds singing on the branches.</p> <p>A tree is always part of a larger landscape.</p>
Additional comments	<p>We go to forests to be safe, to be able to think our private thoughts and about our dreams and fears. The forest is a place to find human scale in an unstable world.</p> <p>One tree can link several generations together. It binds together private and personal history ("this tree was already here before the war", "this tree was so small when your grandfather was born").</p> <p>Trees are as important in urban environments. They can be meaningful mentally, but big cities are also looking at ways to create more space for trees, also because of climate change.</p> <p>A tree is understandable, and does not pose translation problems.</p>

Proposal 2

Name	Maaria Wirkkala
Theme 2	NATURE – water
Description	<p>The basis for this proposal is European nature and European values. They are central, indivisible and always current.</p> <p>One essential factor that allows European values to exist, breathe and survive is nature.</p> <p>From the countless possible nature themes, I have chosen water, keeping in mind that water is always part of a larger landscape.</p>
Story	<p>Water has different states of matter: solid/ice – liquid/water – gas/steam.</p> <p>Water in its various forms is continuously moving and transforming.</p> <p>It can be linked with thinking and innovation, and to the free movement of people and goods.</p> <p>In its diversity, water goes beyond borders.</p>
Associated motifs/images	<p>Lakes, ponds, fountains, rivers, sea, waves</p> <p>One reference: rivers.</p> <p>Rivers crossing Europe connect places, countries and cultures. A river flowing freely can be linked with free thinking: it has a source and it finds its way despite obstacles. A free stream represents natural freedom of movement.</p> <p>A river has many forms. It can run through a wild landscape, down a mountain and can cross historical sites and cultures.</p> <p>Rivers lead to the sea, which unites us with the rest of the world.</p>
Additional comments	<p>The nature/climate theme concerns us all. It is one of the most important values that we share. It does not have borders.</p>

Qualitative study on new themes for euro banknotes

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PDF ISBN 978-92-899-6160-8, doi:10.2866/911190, QB-03-23-312-EN-N
HTML ISBN 978-92-899-6159-2, doi:10.2866/228562, QB-03-23-312-EN-Q