

## **Denaria Europe is born: a European confederation to defend access to cash**

*Spain, France, Sweden and Portugal join forces to create Denaria Europe.*

*The first European civil society platform dedicated to protecting and promoting citizens' right to access and freely use cash was born.*

*The confederation will be headquartered in Brussels and chaired by Björn Eriksson.*

### **Brussels, 25 June 2026.**

#### **A European confederation for cash**

The national platforms of *Plataforma Denaria* (España), *Droit au cash* (Francia), *Kontantupproret* (Suecia) and *Denaria Portugal* (Portugal) have formalised the creation of Denaria Europe, a European civil society confederation whose purpose is to protect and promote the right of European citizens to access and freely use cash. Headquartered in Brussels, Denaria Europe emerges as an independent and representative voice in the continental debate on the future of the payments ecosystem.

The confederation will be chaired by Björn Eriksson, representative of the Swedish platform, and will have a Board of directors composed of members from the four founding countries. Denaria Europe will act as a confederal space for coordination, strategic dialogue and joint action, while respecting the diversity of national realities and regulatory frameworks among its members.

The board of directors of Denaria Europe is composed as follows: Björn Eriksson serves as President of the confederation and Rakela Cerovic serves as Secretary General.

#### **Why Denaria Europe was created**

Cash use in Europe has fallen from 72% to 52% of point-of-sale transactions between 2019 and 2024, according to the ECB's SPACE 2024 study. This transformation, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of digital payment methods, has not taken place on neutral terms: major private payment network operators have systematically invested in encouraging the shift away from cash, while the infrastructure that supports it — ATM networks, bank branches and cash access points — has been progressively reduced.

According to the ECB's SPACE 2024 study, 62% of euro area citizens consider having the option to pay in cash to be important or very important — a figure that increased by two percentage points between 2022 and 2024. This demonstrates that the decline in cash use does not reflect a popular mandate to eliminate it, but rather structural and

commercial pressures operating independently of citizens' preferences.

Against this backdrop, Denaria Europe was created with the mission of defending, promoting and safeguarding access to and acceptance of cash as part of a balanced, inclusive and resilient payments ecosystem. Denaria Europe does not position itself against digital innovation; rather, it advocates for the coexistence of all payment methods and for every citizen's right to choose how they pay.

### **Cash in Europe: the full picture**

Despite European legislation recognising cash as legal tender, and the European Commission's 2023 legislative proposal to strengthen obligations regarding cash acceptance, Denaria Europe has found that the reality on the ground tells a different story.

ATM networks have contracted significantly across Europe over the past decade. In Italy, for the first time, 7.8% of the population lives in municipalities without a single bank branch. Meanwhile, cash acceptance among businesses in the euro area fell from 96% to 88% between 2021 and 2024.

The data also show that fraud is concentrated in digital channels rather than in cash. According to the Joint Report on Payment Fraud published by the European Banking Authority (EBA) and the ECB in 2025, digital payment fraud in the European Economic Area reached €4.2 billion in 2024, 20% higher than in 2022. Fraud linked to cash is, by comparison, negligible.

### **Denaria Europe's commitments**

- **Regular monitoring.** Denaria Europe will publish reports and barometers on cash access, acceptance and use across European countries, ensuring that citizens have access to independent and reliable information.
- **Institutional dialogue.** It will engage with European institutions, regulators and central banks to ensure that citizens' perspectives are reflected in payment policies.
- **Knowledge generation.** It will promote research and regulatory analysis on the impact of digitalisation on cash access, financial inclusion and the resilience of payment systems.
- **Public awareness.** Through conferences, reports and campaigns, it will work to ensure that citizens — especially the most vulnerable — understand the implications of the transformation of the payments ecosystem.

### **Press contact**

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