

Mario Draghi: Short address on the occasion of the launch of the Europa series €5 banknote

Speech by Mr Mario Draghi, President of the European Central Bank, at the launch of the Europa series €5 banknote, Bratislava, 2 May 2013.

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I mentioned this at the end of today's press conference, but let me say again that I'm very pleased to be here today to see the launch of the new 5 euro, the first banknote of the Europa series.

The new banknote will join 15 billion euro notes already in circulation. They are the most visible and tangible symbol of European integration, used from one end of the continent to the other. With the Europa series, we are giving a face to our currency. A portrait of Europa, a figure from Greek mythology, has been incorporated into some of the security features of the new series.

After centuries of division, the European Union was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize last year for its contribution to "the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe".

We all know that Europe is experiencing some challenging times. Governments and citizens are making extraordinary efforts to put their economies on a sounder footing and to build a more stable future for the European Union. In times like these, it's important to remember what the Union and the euro have achieved and what they mean in the longer term, especially for young people.

The children who are here today are growing up in a continent of peace. They belong to the "euro generation" – they have only known one currency. We invited them to attend a photo event with the Governing Council this morning. We are happy for them to be with us on this occasion to mark the launch of the next generation of euro banknotes.