



Cash matters – now, more than ever, in the time of coronavirus

Brussels, 15 April 2020 - Groups representing the currency, ATM, transportation and security sectors call on governments, central banks, media, business and society to stand up for cash to protect the resilience of the existing payment ecosystem and ensure vulnerable groups are not deprived of the only means of payment that is available to all. Cash is safe: we should stop stigmatising its users.

Banknotes and coins are safe to use in the era of the Coronavirus. Stigmatising their use erodes personal freedom and choice, hurts marginalised groups, and only benefits private payment providers at the expense of the consumer. A coalition of stakeholders came together to stress these points to policymakers, media and the public. **The International Currency Association (ICA, representing the currency industry), CashEssentials (a pro-cash policy group), the International Security Ligue (representing the private security sector), the European Security Transport Association (ESTA, the European cash management companies association), the ATM Industry Association (a not-for-profit trade association representing the international ATM industry) and Cash Matters (an advocacy movement for cash) have joined forces to continue to supply cash in an uninterrupted and safe way, and advocate globally for cash's role at the heart of our economies.**

Governments around the world have stressed the importance of ensuring the continued supply of **cash as a critical infrastructure**. The currency, security, ATM and transport sectors have been working tirelessly throughout this pandemic to ensure that the supply of cash continues for everyone – ensuring **cash continues to fulfil its role in protecting privacy, choice, and access to payment for all, including the most vulnerable. Intensive measures have been taken to ensure continued supply and availability of cash, safeguarding secure processes and health and the safety of workers and service operators throughout production sites, transportation and distribution to ensure availability and access to cash to the public around the globe.**

As the Bank of International Settlements and central banks around the world, as well as public health organisations like the WHO and the Robert Koch Institute, have stressed, **[cash is safe to use](#)**. Consumers using payment cards should take the same precautions as those handling banknotes and coins, by washing their hands and minimising contact with any surfaces. **Consumers and cashiers are exposed to the same risk independent of the choice of payment instrument.**

Cash is a universal means of payment available to all, regardless of social status, financial standing, creditworthiness, age, gender, race, nationality, and ability. It is **particularly vital to older people, the homeless and other marginalized groups, like the 1.7 billion unbanked people in this world**. Cash also **protects the privacy and anonymity of its users**, and their personal freedom; card, mobile and contactless payments increase amounts of data being shared on consumers.

Merchants and consumers should continue using cash – because standing up for cash means protecting our civil liberties and helping the most vulnerable. Cash is resilient in times of crisis, it plays a critical and positive societal and economic role, and it is safe to use. Governments and central banks should ensure everyone who wants to pay with cash can do so, free of stigma.

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More information

International Currency Association

The International Currency Association exists to create a coherent voice for the currency industry – covering design, production, manufacturing and distribution. We are the first industry body of its kind with a membership made up of businesses that span the sector.

<https://currencyassociation.org/>

CashEssentials

CashEssentials is as an independent initiative offering a platform for debate about the payments and monetary ecosystems, and conducting and fostering high-quality research on cash and its future.

<https://cashesentials.org/>

International Security Ligue

The Ligue unites the worlds' foremost companies managing this essential foundation in a professional, controlled way. Represented throughout the world, the Ligue plays a vital role in defining and maintaining the highest ethical and professional standards for the private security industry.

<https://www.security-ligue.org/>

European Security Transport Association

ESTA is the European Cash Management Companies Association. ESTA is the recognized voice of the industry ensuring that cash is safe, available and an efficient means of payment.

<https://www.esta-cash.eu/>

ATM Industry Association

ATMIA is the leading non-profit trade association representing the entire global ATM industry. ATMIA serves more than 11,000 members from over 650 companies located in 70 countries spanning the entire ATM ecosphere, including financial institutions, independent ATM deployers, equipment manufacturers, processors and a plethora of ATM service and value-added solution providers.

<https://www.atmia.com/>

Cash Matters

CashMatters is a pro-cash advocacy movement, which channels the voices that support the existence and relevance of cash as an integral part of the payment landscape now and in future.

<https://www.cashmatters.org/>