

## EXPLAINED: WHY SHOPS IN GERMANY WILL SOON BE FORCED TO GIVE YOU A RECEIPT

**Is there really a point in retailers printing a receipt? Doesn't the cash register log it?**

The obligation to issue receipts serves to increase transparency in the fight against tax fraud, as additional data will have to be printed on the receipt compared to the current requirements, [authorities say](#).

In a cash register review or a tax audit it is apparently easier to check whether the business transaction was individually recorded and stored. For example, a comparison of the receipt with the records of the software can reveal any manipulation of the system.

**Is everyone okay about this?**

No. In fact, there's been a few high profile outspoken critics of the plan.

Federal Economics Minister Peter Altmaier, of the centre-right Christian Democrats, told broadcaster ZDF television's "Morgenmagazin" on Monday: "When I buy a roll, I don't look on the receipt to see if there's any fraud."

Criticism of the new law also came from the environmental organization BUND. "The till receipt obligation primarily produces mountains of rubbish from non-recyclable and problematic thermal paper till receipts," said BUND waste expert Rolf Buschmann.

According to German daily Welt, the amount of receipts printed out each year could fill 43 football fields. And if they were laid one behind the other, they would be 2.2 million kilometers long, enough to wrap receipts around the equator 50 times.

"We talk about environmental protection and discuss the reduction of coffee-to-go cups, but then create mountains of waste made of coated paper," Daniel Schneider of the Central Association of the German Bakery Trade told the "Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung"

Experts consider sales receipts to be particularly bad for the environment due to them being coated in harmful chemicals.

However, retailers are moving towards using more environmentally friendly sales slip paper.

The Finance Ministry justifies the mandatory issue of receipts with the fact that it will make the work of local tax investigators easier.