
Revision of Coinage Ordinance

Acceptance criteria for exchanging coins

On 18 December 2020, the Federal Council approved the revision of the Coinage Ordinance, to take effect from 1 March 2021. This provides for stricter treatment in the case of redemptions of ‘shredder coins’. These changes had become necessary because the severe damage sustained (deformation, detail on the obverse/reverse not clearly identifiable, foreign bodies or substances) makes it impossible to thoroughly and safely examine the authenticity of such coins. The new provisions draw a distinction between coins worn as a result of normal use and coins that have been damaged, for example through recycling at metal processing plants.

Coins worn through normal use

This category includes those coins that have been worn through normal use in payment transactions over the course of time, i.e. that show normal signs of wear. They must be identifiable as individual coins, but no longer suitable for further use in payment transactions due to their condition. Examples of such wear include discolouration, scratch marks, soiling, bends and dents, detail on obverse/reverse worn away through use. These coins will continue to be reimbursed at their nominal value.

Damaged coins

Damaged coins will be exchanged only if they meet the criteria set out in art. 6 of the Coinage Ordinance:

- Any danger to staff as a result of working in connection with the receipt and examination of the coins can be ruled out.
- The damaged coins must be free from contamination with foreign bodies or substances.
- The damaged coins must be identifiable as individual coins and it must be possible to process them by machine.

The following pictures show examples of damaged coins that are eligible for exchange.



Damaged coins that cannot be reimbursed

This category includes those coins that have been damaged as a result of abnormal use or treatment, as in the case of recycling at metal processing plants, for example. These coins show signs of severe damage. Examples of this include severe deformation, unidentifiable detail on the obverse/reverse, and contamination with foreign bodies or substances. Such coins will only be redeemed if they can be processed and checked by machine.

The following pictures show examples of damaged coins that are not eligible for exchange.

