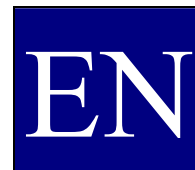




**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



**Council Conclusions on  
Common guidelines  
for the national sides and the issuance of euro coins intended  
for circulation**

*2922th ECONOMIC and FINANCIAL AFFAIRS Council meeting*

*Brussels, 10 February 2009*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council welcomes the common guidelines for the national sides and the issuance of euro coins intended for circulation, which were presented by the Commission in its Recommendation adopted on 19 December 2008 and which were prepared in close cooperation with Member States.

The new Commission Recommendation consolidates and replaces the two previous Commission Recommendations in this field, which were endorsed by the Council on 8 December 2003 and 7 June 2005 respectively.

In particular, the Council agrees on the following additional or modified elements:

- Euro coins intended for circulation should be put into circulation at face value. This does not exclude that a minor proportion of issued euro coins is sold at a higher price, if justified by reasons such as special quality or packaging. This rule should apply as from 1 January 2010 for the countries having Monetary Agreements with the European Community. The Commission is invited to review the functioning of the existing Monetary Agreements and to consider possible increases in the ceilings for coin issuance.

**P R E S S**

- The national side of the euro coins intended for circulation should bear the 12 European stars that should fully surround the national design, including the year mark and the indication of the issuing Member State's name. The European stars should be depicted as on the European flag.
- The designs used for the national sides of the regular euro coins intended for circulation denominated in euro or in cent should not be modified, except in cases where the Head of State referred to on a coin changes. Issuing Member States should, however, be allowed to update the design of euro coins depicting the Head of State every fifteen years in order to take account of a change in the appearance of the Head of State. A temporary vacancy or the provisional occupation of the function of Head of State should not give the right to change the national sides of the regular euro coins intended for circulation.
- Member States may issue commemorative euro coins intended for circulation showing a different national design from that of the regular euro coins intended for circulation. Such commemorative coins should only commemorate subjects of major national or European relevance. Commemorative euro coins intended for circulation collectively issued by all euro-area Member States should only commemorate subjects of the highest European relevance and their issuance should be endorsed by the Council.
- The number of issues of commemorative euro coins intended for circulation should be limited to one per issuing Member State per year, except in cases where:
  - (i) commemorative euro coins intended for circulation are collectively issued by all euro-area Member States;
  - (ii) a possible commemorative euro coin intended for circulation is issued at the occasion of a temporary vacancy or a provisional occupation of the function of Head of State.
- The edge lettering on commemorative euro coins intended for circulation should be the same as on regular euro coins intended for circulation.
- Member States should inform each other on the draft designs of new national sides of euro coins, including the edge letterings, and of the volume of issuance before they formally approve these designs. To this effect, new draft designs of euro coins should be forwarded by the issuing Member State to the Commission, as a rule, at least six months before the planned issue date. The Commission should verify compliance with the rules and inform the other Member States without delay via the Economic and Financial Committee's relevant subcommittee. If and when the Commission considers that the common guidelines are not respected, the relevant subcommittee of the Economic and Financial Committee should decide whether to approve the design. The relevant subcommittee of the Economic and Financial Committee should, furthermore, approve the designs of commemorative euro coins intended for circulation collectively issued by all euro-area Member States.
- No changes are required to the national sides and edge letterings of both regular and commemorative euro coins intended for circulation which have been first issued or approved according to the agreed information procedure prior to the adoption of these conclusions."