



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
EUROPEAN ANTI-FRAUD OFFICE (OLAF)  
**Protection of the EURO**

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## **THE PROTECTION OF EURO COINS IN 2009**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the activities of the European Technical & Scientific Centre (ETSC) and of the situation as regards coin counterfeiting in the year 2009. Section 2 gives first a detailed overview of the evolution of euro coin counterfeiting in 2009. Sections 3 and 4 then present the regular and specific activities that the ETSC has carried out in 2009 in order to reinforce the protection of euro coins.

## 2. SITUATION WITH REGARD TO COUNTERFEIT EURO COINS

A distinction that has to be made on counterfeit euro coins is between those detected in circulation and those seized before circulation. The latter are usually seized by police before causing financial damage, whereas the former are generally detected in coin sorting centres, operated by National Central Banks or private sector CIT (cash-in-transit) companies.

### 2.1. Counterfeit coins seized in circulation

The total number of counterfeit euro coins removed from circulation in 2009 reached 172 100, a decrease of about 12% from 2008.

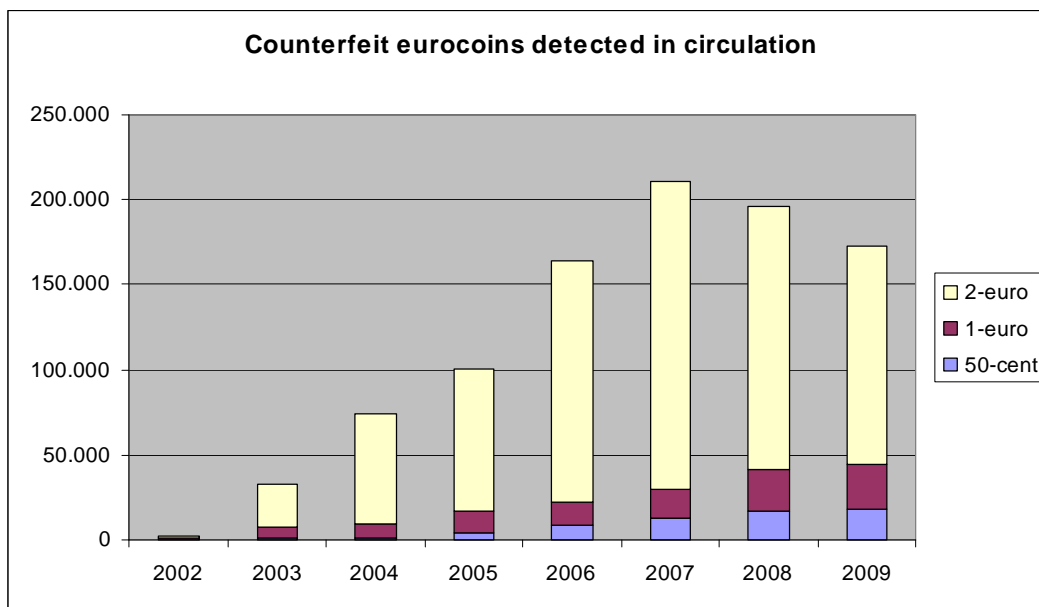
The breakdown by denomination of counterfeits found in circulation for the last four years is shown below:

<b>Counterfeit euro coins detected in circulation, 2006 – 2009*</b>				
	<b>50-cent</b>	<b>1-euro</b>	<b>2-euro</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>2009</b>	18 100	26 500	127 500	172 100
<b>2008</b>	16 600	24 500	154 800	195 900
<b>2007</b>	13 000	16 200	181 900	211 100
<b>2006</b>	8 300	14 100	141 400	163 800

\* The figures comprise both stamped counterfeits (common classes) and cast counterfeits (local classes).

The number of 2-euro counterfeits decreased by almost 18%, although this denomination remains by far the most counterfeited euro coin. Counterfeit coins of 50-cent and 1-euro continued to increase, by 9% and 8%, respectively. Overall, more than 950 000 counterfeit euro coins have been removed from circulation since the introduction of the euro coins in 2002.

The evolution since the introduction of euro coins in 2002 is given in the following chart:



The evolution in the number of counterfeit euro coins removed from circulation reflects the efforts Member States are making to implement Commission Recommendation of 27 May 2005 concerning the authentication of euro coins. The take-up of these measures caused sharp increases of counterfeits removed from circulation in 2006 and 2007.

However, efforts vary among Member States. The Commission therefore adopted on 11 September 2009 a proposal for a Regulation on the authentication of euro coins. The aim of this proposal is to implement such procedures EU-wide so as to fight effectively against euro coin counterfeiting. More details on this initiative can be found in Section 4.2.

In 2009, a small number of countries made progress with implementing the Recommendation and saw increasing numbers of counterfeits removed from circulation. This group includes Portugal, Slovakia, Ireland, Montenegro and Croatia. In all other countries the figures decreased. In countries where authentication procedures are in place, the decrease is generally moderate, due to a consolidation in implementation. In other countries, particularly in Greece, Italy and Spain, counterfeit figures continued to drop sharply, following a similar trend in 2008. This may be explained by a certain 'pause', as reflexions are being launched in these countries about the preparations to implement the recently adopted obligation to authenticate coins as of 2012.

In addition to the consolidation of the authentication efforts by Member States, the slowdown in the new counterfeiting activity, started in 2008, seems to have been confirmed in 2009. This is shown by the number of new types of counterfeit coins discovered in 2009, which is lower than the one observed before 2008 (see Section 2.3). This activity significantly increased again in the second half of 2009.

Counterfeit euro coins were found in all Member States of the euro area in 2009, with the exception of Cyprus. Germany remains the country where most counterfeit coins are found. Its share had come down the last years due to progress made in

other countries, but last year increased again to around 45%. Small numbers of counterfeit euro coins are also detected in Member States which are not part of the euro area and third countries.

Overall, the number of counterfeit coins detected in circulation in 2009 remains significantly lower than the sum of counterfeit coins in the euro area countries before the introduction of the euro, although the situation is different among Member States. The number is also very small by comparison to the 87.5 billion (genuine) euro coins or the 15.5 billion of the three highest denominations.

## 2.2. Counterfeit coins seized before circulation

In addition to the counterfeit euro coins removed from circulation, counterfeits are regularly seized before they enter into circulation, mainly in the framework of police operations. These include dismantling of clandestine mints, but also seizures of significant quantities from individuals that might, in one way or another, be involved in the distribution of counterfeit coins. These seizures occur irregularly and the number of counterfeits seized before circulation therefore varies significantly from year to year.

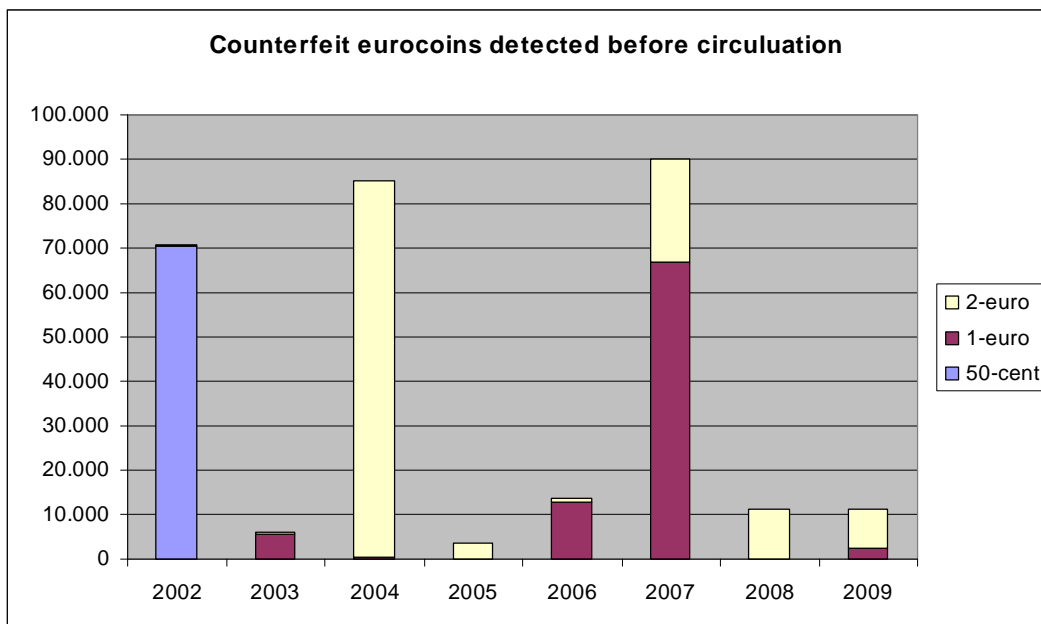
The number of counterfeit coins seized before circulation in 2009 was around 11.000. The breakdown per denomination of counterfeit euro coins found before circulation and registered in the CMS for the last four years is shown below:

<b>Counterfeit euro coins detected before circulation, 2006 – 2009*</b>				
	<b>50-cent</b>	<b>1-euro</b>	<b>2-euro</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>2009</b>	5	2 579	8 477	11 061
<b>2008</b>	1	2	11 200	11 203
<b>2007</b>	8	66 700	23 200	89 908
<b>2006</b>	3	13 000	750	13 753

\* The figures comprise both stamped counterfeits (common classes) and cast counterfeits (local classes).

For the first year since 2002, no illegal mint has been dismantled by law enforcement. However, some large seizures were made by the Italian police in 2009. Overall, about 290.000 counterfeit euro coins have been seized before circulation since 2002.

The development of counterfeit coins detected before circulation since the introduction of euro coins in 2002 is given in the following chart:



### 2.3. Common classes (stamped counterfeit coins)

Counterfeit coins detected in the Member States are analysed by Coin National Analysis Centres (CNACs). They are classified by reference to already identified counterfeit types. Counterfeits that cannot be classified to one of the already identified types are sent to the ETSC in order to create a new class or variant.

A distinction is made between common classes and local classes. Local classes correspond to cast counterfeit coins, usually produced in smaller quantities. These are considered in the next section.

Common classes are counterfeits made with a stamping process, similar to the one used in official minting. With such processes, larger amounts of counterfeits can be produced, which is why these counterfeits are monitored on EU level. Stamped classes usually bear defects which are characteristic of the tools used to produce them. Stamped counterfeit coins are classified to classes and variants according to these defects, because similar defects may indicate that the counterfeits have been produced by the same tools, indicating possibly the same illegal mint. New variants of classes indicate a development in production tools. Variants therefore provide useful indications of the development in counterfeiting activity.

#### 2.3.1. Creation of common classes

The total number of families of counterfeits (common classes) created by the ETSC continued to rise substantially in 2009, indicating a potential increase in the number of illegal mints producing counterfeit euro coins. In particular, 16 common classes were created in 2009, a development somewhat higher than in 2008 but similar to previous years. The number of common classes created by the ETSC for each year since the introduction of euro coins is indicated in the table below.

<b>Number of newly identified common classes</b>				
	<b>50-cent</b>	<b>1-euro</b>	<b>2-euro</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>2002</b>	1	5	5	11
<b>2003</b>	6	4	5	15
<b>2004</b>	11	3	8	22
<b>2005</b>	9	3	6	18
<b>2006</b>	6	5	3	14
<b>2007</b>	7	6	2	15
<b>2008</b>	6	2	4	12
<b>2009</b>	3	5	8	16
<b>TOTAL</b>	49	33	41	123

The total number of classes has now risen to 123 for the three highest denominations. Despite the large number of common classes, the bulk of counterfeit coins is still concentrated. In particular, one common class represented in 2009 more than 40% of the total number of registered 2-euro counterfeits (found in circulation). For the 50-cent denomination, almost half of the counterfeits found in circulation belongs to a single class. In total, six classes are responsible for around two-thirds of the total number of counterfeits found in circulation. Except for one, no illegal mint has been dismantled for any of those classes.

Of the total number of classes, 17 were proven to be connected to the clandestine mints that have been dismantled until now. For the remaining classes, evidence was found for seven classes, following their creation, demonstrating that they are linked to another class. This leads to the conclusion that there are illegal mints that are producing or have produced up to 99 classes of counterfeit euro coins and that remain undiscovered to date. However, it is estimated that the number of significant and active illegal mints is more limited, perhaps less than 20.

### **2.3.2. Creation of variants**

Within the common classes, the diversity of counterfeit euro coins has also continued to increase significantly, reflecting an intense and continuing activity of counterfeiters, producing new minting tools and additional quantities of counterfeit coins. In 2009, 48 new variants were created, which is slightly higher than in 2008, although lower than the years before. This brings their total number to 523.

The number of variants (including new classes) created by the ETSC for each year since the introduction of euro coins is indicated in the table below.

<b>Number of newly identified common classes + variants</b>				
	<b>50-cent</b>	<b>1-euro</b>	<b>2-euro</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>2002</b>	1	14	19	34
<b>2003</b>	6	7	50	63
<b>2004</b>	12	12	72	96
<b>2005</b>	12	7	81	100
<b>2006</b>	10	9	51	70
<b>2007</b>	10	18	44	72
<b>2008</b>	8	6	26	40
<b>2009</b>	4	14	30	48
<b>TOTAL</b>	63	87	373	523

The variants describing all counterfeit types detected include national sides of all countries that have issued euro coins until 2009, except for Slovakia, Malta and Cyprus and the three states having a monetary agreement on the euro (Vatican, San Marino and Monaco).

In 2009, the first counterfeit coins were detected with a Slovenian national side. Also counterfeit samples for each of the three highest denominations were detected with the new designs for the common side, introduced on genuine coins in 2007.

In addition to the usual circulation coins, counterfeits have been found of commemorative euro coins, i.e. 2-euro coins with specific national sides.

#### **2.4. Local classes (cast counterfeit coins)**

The number of cast counterfeit coins detected as well as the percentage of the total number of counterfeits in circulation are shown in the table below.

<b>Cast counterfeit coins</b>								
<b>Year</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Number</b>	756	1172	405	384	64	275	310	717
<b>Percentage</b>	34,9%	3,6%	0,5%	0,4%	0,0%	0,1%	0,2%	0,4%

Cast counterfeit coins mainly concern the 2-euro denomination. They are generally of a relatively low quality and quantity and should therefore be considered as less dangerous.



### **3. REGULAR ACTIVITIES OF THE ETSC**

The primary mission of the ETSC is the technical/scientific analysis and classification of common classes of counterfeit coins. This type of activity is already covered in chapter 2.

The Council attributed the coordination of the activities of the competent technical authorities to protect euro coins against counterfeiting to the Commission. This co-ordination takes place mainly in the Counterfeit Coin Experts Group but materialises also through the cooperation with coin related and other groups.

#### **3.1. Counterfeit Coin Experts Group (CCEG)**

The Counterfeit Coin Experts Group (CCEG), chaired by the Commission/OLAF, is the basic group serving to co-ordinate Member States' technical actions with respect to the protection of the euro coins against counterfeiting, in line with Council Decision of 8 December 2003 and the Commission Decision of 29 October 2004. The CCEG meetings bring together the Heads of the Coin National Analysis Centres (CNACs), the ETSC as main player, the ECB and Europol.

The CCEG held two meetings in 2009. These have enabled the exchange of information on subjects emerging from the daily work at the CNACs and the ETSC. For some specific issues, proposals to the CCEG were elaborated among a group of coin experts in technical meetings of the ETSC Work team (see Section 4.1).

In addition to these topics, a number of cases of medals and tokens have also been discussed in the CCEG in the framework of the Council Regulation 2182/2004 of 6 December 2004 concerning medals and tokens similar to euro coins:

- a medal depicting the current head of state of Monaco and the knight in armour present on the first series of Monaco coins: the CCEG opined that the designs for those medals were indeed similar to the euro coins;
- a gold-plated medal featuring a portrait of Garibaldi similar to the one appearing on a commemorative 2-euro coin issued by San Marino: the CCEG opined that the designs for those medals were indeed similar to the euro coins;
- a medal mentioning the Vatican City and featuring a design celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of EMU: the CCEG opined that the design for the 'common side' of those medals was indeed similar to the euro coins;
- a series of shopping kart and gaming tokens, all having technical properties close to euro coins: the CCEG considered these objects indeed fall under the definition of medals and tokens and that they did not qualify for any of the exemptions;
- a series of cases, which had been discussed earlier, were discussed once more in order to take into account the changes in the Council Regulation that entered into force early 2009.

### **3.2. Other institutional groups**

Again in 2009, the ETSC has regularly informed the following groups about the situation of coin counterfeiting and discussed possible actions to be undertaken:

- The Mint Directors Working Group (MDWG), which brings together the heads of the Mints of the EU Member States. In that framework, Commission/OLAF promotes and cooperates in the elaboration of a study concerning higher security characteristics for coins; and has initiated a study on the measurement of the conductivity of euro coins.
- The international Mint Directors Conference (MDC), comprising participants from official mints throughout the world, as well as industrial observers. In the framework of the MDC's Technical Committee, OLAF chairs the Sub-committee on counterfeit and unfit coins, aimed at better authentication of circulating coins and stronger international cooperation in technical matters and with law enforcement. In that context, an MDC Guideline was approved by the Technical Committee.
- The Euro Coin Sub-Committee (ECSC) of the Economic and Financial Committee, which brings together representatives from the coin issuing authorities of the Member States. Commission/OLAF initiatives are systematically discussed in that group.
- The Euro Counterfeiting Experts Group (ECEG), functioning in the framework of the Advisory Anti-fraud Coordination Committee (Cocolaf). This group, chaired by OLAF, brings together counterfeit experts from law enforcement, central banks and ministries. A number of coin protection related issues were discussed in that Group, in 2009, namely the legislative initiative concerning coin authentication, as well as the Pericles actions.
- The ECB's Counterfeit Working Group (CWG) concerning counterfeit banknotes. Also, the ETSC continues to contribute to the improvement and testing of the CMS database, which is administered by the ECB.
- Europol's Forgery of Money Group. The ETSC highlights the counterfeit coin aspects at the Europol meetings and provides assistance to Europol and National Central Offices (NCOs). The ETSC also maintains contact with the Counterfeit Currency Unit of the General Secretariat of Interpol.
- The Euro Cash User Group (ECUG). Meetings are organised by the Commission and the ECB in order to inform the main users of euro cash in the private sector about developments concerning euro banknotes and coins, including counterfeits.

### **3.3. Cooperation with private sector coin-operated industry**

In 2009, the cooperation continued with the coin-processing and coin-operated industry, with a view to enabling better prevention of fraud in this domain. The Commission/OLAF keeps the coin-operated industry informed of technical developments regarding counterfeits, foreign coins and other objects, so that equipment may be adjusted to safely reject these objects.

Besides the meetings mentioned above of the ECUG and ad-hoc meetings with representatives from the industry, OLAF organised a specific meeting in July 2009 on coin authentication. At this meeting, the future provisions for implementing the authentication obligation for euro coins were discussed. This stakeholder dialogue was part of the preparation of the legislative proposal (see Section 4.2) and gathered representatives from the coin-processing manufacturing industry, commercial banks and the cash-in-transit companies. Also the modalities for testing coin-processing machines on their capability to detect counterfeits were discussed, with the aim of simplifying the procedures as an effort to reduce administrative burden and compliance costs.

In this light, the list of successfully tested coin-processing machines has been regularly updated throughout 2009. The number of machines on the list has been growing further and reached 48 at the end of 2009. It can be found on the following address: [http://ec.europa.eu/anti\\_fraud/pages\\_euro/euro-coins/machines.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud/pages_euro/euro-coins/machines.pdf)

The ETSC, in close collaboration with the French CNAC, continued to organize and receive in Pessac a number of test sessions with coin mechanism manufacturers, aimed at updating sorting and coin validating equipment in the recognition of euro coins and the rejection of counterfeits.

#### **4. SPECIFIC INITIATIVES CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF EURO COINS**

##### **4.1. Pericles actions for the protection of euro coins**

The 'Pericles' Programme is a Community financing facility aimed at reinforcing the protection of the euro banknotes and coins against counterfeiting, by means of seminars, conferences, staff exchanges, studies and other actions undertaken by Member States or the Commission. In the year 2009, the Pericles Programme financed a number of initiatives specifically or equally oriented to the protection of euro coins, as follows.

Counterfeit currency manual. The Commission/OLAF, in cooperation with Europol, the European Central Bank and experts from Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy and Interpol has been working on a counterfeit currency manual, in two different formats. A simplified form of this manual, entitled "Counterfeit euro? What to do", was already distributed to police officers in 2008.

In 2009, an advanced form of the manual, containing more detailed information for counterfeit experts, as well as analyses of technical, institutional, operational and legal issues regarding counterfeiting, was issued to experts in several language versions. The expert manual contains a specific chapter on counterfeit coins and investigation methods for illegal mints.

Conductivity study. The Commission/OLAF also commissioned a technical study on calibration methods for measuring the electrical conductivity of coins. This parameter is used for the reading of coins in coin-processing machines and therefore also for the detection of counterfeits. The study started in 2007 and was finalised in 2009.

The contractors performing the study carried out a scientific analysis of different measurement methods. A calibration procedure has been proposed for the most promising measurement method, similar to the one used by European Mints, and its precision has been assessed as satisfactory. The ETSC intends to continue working on this issue in the coming years with a broader group of stakeholders, in order to ensure that the electrical conductivity of coins can be measured in a precise and consistent way, throughout the EU and internationally.

The 'ETSC Work Team'. The Pericles programme also financed the Commission's initiative for the "ETSC Work Team for technical support to law enforcement on counterfeit euro coins". The Work Team chaired by OLAF, held three technical meetings in 2009, gathering technical coin experts from several CNACs on specific issues.

These meetings focused on issues related to the technical analysis of counterfeits by coin experts, covered notably the following topics:

- A discussion of the technical provisions for implementing the coin authentication, supporting the preparation of the Commission legislative proposal (see Section 4.2).
- The improvement of support tools for classification by experts of counterfeits, in particular the format used to describe counterfeit types and the development of a new software application assisting CNACs in the classification of counterfeit coins.
- The conduct of a project with volunteering Member States aiming at estimating the counterfeit ratio among coins in circulation.
- A complete revision of the official procedure for the technical analysis of euro coins suspect to be counterfeit.
- The setting-up of a central register gathering information on the discovered illegal mint and major counterfeit classes.
- The preparation of common support material for training programmes on manual coin authentication by cash handlers.

Training. The ETSC provided specialised training on counterfeit euro coin analysis and classification to experts from interested CNACs on the ETSC premises in Pessac on 10-12 March 2009.

The ETSC also participates regularly in seminars concerning the protection of the euro organised under the Pericles programme. One of these events was the conference aimed at strengthening the protection of the euro in the financial sector in Montenegro, held in Podgorica from 16 to 17 July 2009, which featured a specific workshop on counterfeit euro coins.

## **4.2. Coin-related legislative developments**

During the year 2009, further significant development took place concerning legislation to protect the euro.

The four amended legislative texts, adopted by the Council on 18 December 2008 and mentioned in last year's report, were published in the Official Journal on 22

January 2009. The new Regulations "laying down measures necessary for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting" were published as Council Regulation 44/2009 and Council Regulation 45/2009. Those concerning medals and tokens similar to euro coins were published as Council Regulation 46/2009 and Council Regulation 47/2009.

On 11 September 2009, the Commission adopted a proposal for a new Regulation concerning authentication of euro coins and handling of euro coins unfit for circulation. This proposal aims to define the procedures for implementing the obligation for credit institutions and other cash handlers to check euro coins for authenticity, introduced by the amended Council Regulation 1338/2001. The procedures are largely based on those specified in Commission Recommendation of 27 May 2005 concerning authentication of euro coins and handling of euro coins unfit for circulation, which had been evaluated in 2008 (see previous annual report for more details).

The Commission proposed that the credit institutions and other cash handlers concerned must ensure that euro coin authentication is carried out either by means of coin processing equipment capable of detecting counterfeits or manually, by trained staff. In addition, Member States will be responsible for overseeing the functioning of the euro coin authentication system. They have to perform a relevant number of on-the-spot controls by testing coin processing machines.

In the authentication process, not only counterfeits are removed from circulation but also those genuine euro coins which are no longer fit for circulation. The proposal states that coins which have been rendered unfit by long circulation or accident should be reimbursed. But Member States would have the possibility to refuse reimbursement of coins become unfit as a result of manipulation. Specific packaging and provisions for handling fees will be required for submissions and Member States will destroy the unfit coins removed from circulation.

The Commission proposal will be adopted following discussion in the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers. EU-wide implementation of euro coin authentication is expected to start in January 2012 at the latest, as provided for in the amended Council Regulation 1338/2001.

### **4.3. Cooperation with third countries**

Euro coins circulate not only within the EU but also outside its territory. It can be expected that the same holds for counterfeit euro coins. In order to protect euro coins outside the EU, OLAF/ETSC signed two cooperation arrangements in 2008 with Croatia and Montenegro.

In 2009, these Arrangements have been implemented. Coin experts have been trained by the ETSC in March 2009 and CNACs have started analysing and classifying counterfeit euro coins in both countries. Statistical data concerning counterfeit euro coins detected and other technical assistance was exchanged and are integrated in the figures provided in chapter 2. The figures underline that indeed substantial numbers of counterfeit euro coins also circulate outside the EU.

Technical assistance was also given to the Turkish and Colombian authorities concerning counterfeit euro coins seized in their countries.

#### **4.4. Other potential threats to euro coins**

Besides counterfeiting, there are other potential threats for the use of euro coins in hand-to-hand transactions and vending machines. These threats include foreign coins, slugs, blanks, medals and tokens similar to euro coins. The latter two have already been discussed in section 3.1.

Concerning foreign coins, following discussions between the Commission and the Turkish authorities, the latter have replaced their coin series in 2009 with a new series. The decision was taken by the Turkish authorities in the framework of a more general change in the currency system. The new series of Turkish coins were specified in a way that increases the differences with euro coins.

Slugs are coin-like objects specifically produced to imitate the physical properties of genuine coins and are typically aimed at fraudulent use in vending machines. In 2009, some significant cases have been reported by some Member States to the ETSC. For the moment, these issues have been addressed mainly at national level.

Some blanks, intended for minting genuine euro coins, have been detected in circulation. As the materials of the blanks correspond to the materials used for the euro coins, it is difficult to detect them in vending or sorting machines. The quantities involved are relatively low and require action mainly at national level.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

The number of counterfeit euro coins removed from circulation in 2009 amounted to 172 100, which represents a decrease of 12% compared to the year before. The evolution per denomination, however, is contrasted. While the number of 2-euro counterfeits decreased by almost 18%, the numbers for 50-cent and 1-euro continued to increase, by 9% and 8%, respectively. The 2-euro denomination remains by far the most counterfeited euro coin, representing almost 3 out of every 4 counterfeit euro coins.

The evolution in the number of counterfeit euro coins removed from circulation reflects the efforts Member States are making to implement Commission Recommendation of 27 May 2005 concerning the authentication of euro coins. The take-up of these measures caused temporary sharp increases of counterfeits removed from circulation in 2006 and 2007. However, efforts vary among Member States. The Commission therefore adopted on 11 September 2009 a proposal for a Regulation on the authentication of euro coins. The aim of this proposal is to implement such procedures EU-wide so as to fight effectively against euro coin counterfeiting.

A particular development in 2009 was the increasing number of reports on counterfeit euro coins seized outside the EU. The Commission established cooperation agreements with Montenegro and Croatia and also intensified cooperation with the Turkish authorities.

Although no new illegal mint producing counterfeit euro coins was dismantled in 2009, law enforcement also contributed to combating euro coin counterfeiting. Police forces seized in 2009 around 11 000 counterfeit euro coins before the counterfeiters were able to bring them into circulation, similar to 2008. Despite these successes, most of the criminal groups responsible for euro coin counterfeiting have not been dismantled yet.

The above considerations indicate that the system for the protection of euro coins is functioning efficiently. However, continuous vigilance and cooperation is necessary to better guarantee the credible use of euro coins. Specifically, the thrust of future action will need to be directed towards the following issues:

- a) Strengthen cooperation with law enforcement to discover the important illegal mints; the ETSC will increase analytical and intelligence support to law enforcement.
- b) Support the implementation of euro coin authentication procedures by Member States authorities; emphasis to be placed on those among MS which have not yet achieved a high level of implementation in coin authentication.
- c) Continued cooperation with the coin-handling private sector, so as to ensure that companies have the technologies and procedures to efficiently protect the euro coins against counterfeiting.

The Commission, in cooperation with the Member States, Europol and the ECB is working in these directions with a view to further increasing the protection of euro coins.