

Official notice concerning the reproduction of banknotes for publicity reasons or other purposes

The National Bank of Belgium is frequently consulted by persons or enterprises wishing to reproduce its notes for publicity reasons or other purposes. The putting into circulation among the public of imitations of banknotes is liable to cause confusion and shake confidence in paper money unless suitable precautions are taken. For this reason the Bank deems it necessary to give a reminder of the legal provisions concerning the reproduction of its banknotes.

1. Counterfeiting of banknotes is prohibited and subject to severe penalties under Articles 173 *et seq.* of the Penal Code.
2. The Act of 11 June 1889, amended by the law of 3 March 1953, prohibits the manufacture, sale, peddling and distribution of any printed matter or forms obtained by any process whatsoever which, by their external form, display such a similarity with notes as to facilitate the acceptance of the said printed matter or forms in lieu of the imitated value tokens.
3. The Bank owns a copyright in respect of its notes in accordance with the legislation on the subject. The notes may not, therefore, be reproduced or imitated, even in forms which do not contravene the laws referred to under 1. and 2., except with the Bank's permission and subject to the conditions which it lays down.

In connection with this, the Minister of Finance and the National Bank of Belgium have no objection to the manufacture and distribution of reproductions of notes which comply with the following criteria:

- a) In the case of the reproduction of part of a note, or of one or more notes, accompanied by a text or forming part of a larger illustration, the following conditions must be fulfilled:
 - the dimensions must be smaller than two thirds or greater than one and a half times those of the original note;
 - the reproduction must be in black and white or monochromatic; in that case the shade of colours of the note must not be similar to the dominant shade of the original note;
 - the design of the note must be deformed, if the note is reproduced in its entirety and on a material which is not clearly different from paper.
- b) In the case of the reproduction of a note as a form of token representation, the following conditions must be fulfilled:
 - the dimensions must be smaller than two thirds or larger than one and a half times those of the original note;
 - the signatures must not be reproduced;
 - the reproduction must be made of a rigid material, or of a flexible material clearly different from paper.

In the event of any doubt as to whether a contemplated reproduction meets these criteria, the persons concerned are requested to consult the National Bank of Belgium.