



Press release

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Large number of ancient coins returned to Serbia

Around 550 items of Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman coinage have been returned to the Serbian authorities during a visit by a Serbian delegation to the Federal Office of Culture (FOC). The Deputy Director of the FOC, Yves Fischer, handed the coins over yesterday to the Serbian Assistant Minister of Culture, Danijela Vanusic.

The coins that have been returned are tangible testimony to the history and culture of their time. They are archaeologically and scientifically important owing to their uniqueness, rarity and antiquity, with the majority dating from the Roman Empire. Two of the coins are particularly remarkable: a sestertius of Diva Faustina dating from the 2nd century AD and a Byzantine solidus, a gold coin bearing the effigy of Heraclius from the 7th century AD. The approximately 550 coins were seized when they were put up for sale on an online commercial platform. They were forfeited following criminal proceedings conducted by the Ticino Public Prosecutor's Office.

Switzerland and Serbia are parties to the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. The coins were returned during a visit by a Serbian delegation to the Federal Office of Culture as part of an exchange of expertise on heritage protection. The restitution reflects the two states' close collaboration in this area.

Further information

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