Its Just a Part of a History of Change: National Currencies disappearing

Deutschmark
Introduced in its current form in 1948. Became the symbol of German economic stability and prosperity. A mark-denominated currency was introduced in the early 1870s in the wake of German unification when it replaced six separate systems denominated in thalers and gulden.

Dutch guilder
Descended from a 13th century Florentine coin, the fiorino d'oro. Silver guilders were first introduced by Charles V in 1543. The name guilder is the English form of the gulden, itself derived from gouden, the old Dutch word for gold.

Austrian schilling
Austrians are used to currency switches. In the late 19th century the krone replaced the gulden, only to be replaced by the schilling. That was superseded in 1938 by the reichmark but it was re-introduced after the second world war.

Finnish markka
Introduced in Finland in 1860, it replaced the Swedish and Russian currencies then in circulation. It was seen as an important symbol of Finland's national movement. In 1992 it provided early warning of the crisis which was to wreck the exchange rate mechanism when the Finnish central bank cut the markka's link to the mark.

Greek drachma
Dates back to ancient Greece and was used throughout Alexander the Great's empire. The original drachma was a silver coin, the equivalent of a handful of arrows. Adopted as the national currency after Greek independence in the first half of the 18th century.

French franc
Celebrated its 641st birthday last week. It was introduced by Jean the second (the Good) when a coin was struck to celebrate his re lease by the English (on payment of a hefty ransom) after he was taken prisoner at the battle of Poitiers.

Portuguese escudo
Originally a Spanish coin and first minted in Portugal in 1523. It was replaced by the rei in 1834 but came back into favour after the revolution in 1910. The word derives from the latin word scutum (shield).

Italian lira
Said to date back to Charlemagne who struck a silver coin based on the libra (pound). Before the unification of Italy in the 19th century a number of Italian states used lira coins. It became the national currency after Italian unification.

Belgian franc
Introduced in 1832 - two years after Belgium became independent. Modelled on the French franc - with the original five franc piece having the same silver content as its French equivalent.

Irish punt
Replaced sterling in 1928 - six years after Irish independence. The word punt is said to have been introduced by dealers in the London foreign exchange market to distinguish it from the English pound.

Luxembourg franc
Origins date back to the French revolution. Scrapped when Luxembourg signed up to the German customs union in 1842 but brought back five years later, affirming the Grand Dutchy's monetary sovereignty. Economic union with Belgium in 1921 brought widespread use of the Belgian franc.

Spanish peseta
Scholars still argue about its origins. Most popular school of thought is that it comes from a Catalan word meaning little piece and was used to denote the sub-division of the real long before it replaced it as the official currency in 1886.