

## MESKUK & ZIYNET

### TURKISH STATE MINT

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Meskuk



Ziynet



The Turkish State Mint, over the past decade, has been the world's largest manufacturer of gold bullion coins.

In total, 211 million Meskuk and Ziynet coins (655 tonnes – 21 million oz) have been issued since 2000.

The **Turkish State Mint** was founded in 1452 by the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet II.

The Mint, which is located in the Yıldız-Besiktas area of Istanbul, had previously been based in the Topkapi Palace, for centuries the residence of Turkish sultans, from 1723 until 1967.

The Mint is supervised by T.C. BASBAKANLIK HAZINE MUSARLIGI Darphane Ve Damga Matbaasi Genel Mudurlugu.



**REPUBLICAN GOLDS**

The Turkish State Mint issues its range of gold bullion coins, broadly classified as “Republican Golds”, in two versions: **Meskuk** (standard) and **Ziynet** (decorative).

**LEGAL TENDER STATUS**

Although the Ziynet traces its origins to 1898, and the Meskuk to 1944, legislation to formalise their legal tender status, and standardise their minting, was passed on 8 August 1951.

Each coin has a legal tender value in Turkish piastres, but the value is not recorded on the coin. 1 lira = 100 piastres.

The coins have a gold purity of 91.66% (22 carat). The gold is alloyed with copper, which hardens the coins, a traditional practice for gold coins originally designed to be handled as currency.

**MESKUK**

The Meskuk, the **standard** version, is referred to as primarily a “store of value” or “money” coin.

There are 5 sizes:

Legal Tender Value		Normal Weight	Gold Content
Piastres	Lira	Gram	Gram
500	5	36.082	33.07354
250	2 ½	18.041	16.53676
100	1	7.216	6.61461
50	1/2	3.608	3.30730
25	1/4	1.804	1.65365

Source: Turkish State Mint

The word, Meskuk, is derived from an Arabic word that means coins.

**ZIYNET**

The Ziynet, the **decorative** version, is referred to as primarily an “adornment” or “ornamented” coin.

The coins have a larger diameter, and weigh slightly less, than Meskuks.

Many are retailed with a brass hook, soldered onto the rim, so they can be worn.

There are 5 sizes:

Legal Tender Value		Normal Weight	Gold Content
Piastres	Lira	Gram	Gram
500	5	35.080	32.15432
250	2 ½	17.540	16.07716
100	1	7.016	6.43086
50	1/2	3.508	3.21543
25	1/4	1.754	1.60771

Source: Turkish State Mint

The word, Ziynet, is derived from an Arabic word that means ornamentation or decoration.



The Turkish State Mint has been minting coins in Istanbul for more than 500 years.



The Meskuk traces its origins to 1944 and the Ziynet to 1898.



Wholesaler and retailer of Meskuks and Ziynets in Istanbul's Grand Bazaar.



**ROLE OF GOLD COINS**

In Turkey in recent times, gold in the form of jewellery, bars and coins has been prized as a hedge against inflation and currency devaluation.

In addition to their role as a store of value or investment, Meskuks and Ziynets are widely used as gifts, especially the small 1/4 Lira Ziynet (1.60771 g fine).

For many in Turkey, there is a social obligation for family and friends to provide gold coins on important occasions. For example, coins are often given at the time of a couple's engagement, marriage, birth, male circumcision, graduation and conscription into the military.

Turkey has a population of 72 million. Its ethnic groups, Turk (65%), Kurd (19%), Crimean Tatar (7%) and other (15%) are all reported to purchase large quantities of gold coins.

**SUPPLY**

The Turkish State Mint is unusual in that any company or private individual can ask it to mint a nominated size of Meskuk or Ziynet provided there is a minimum order of 1 kg of the nominated size of coin, and larger orders are in multiples of 1 kg.

In addition, the Mint does not stock or sell the coins. It mints coins only when approved kilobars (99.5% gold purity) are supplied by the entity placing the order – delivery of the coins occurring within two working days.

The Mint covers its minting costs for most coin sizes by retaining a part of each kilobar supplied by the ordering entity.

**DISTRIBUTION**

Most Meskuks and Ziynets for national distribution are ordered by a small number of coin wholesalers that are located mainly in or near the Grand Bazaar in Istanbul.

Although there are shops that focus on gold coins, coins are widely traded by the public through Turkey's thousands of gold jewellery shops.

Meskuks and Ziynets are also acquired by Turkish-speaking communities in former Ottoman Empire countries such as Syria, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Bulgaria, Romania and the former Yugoslavia, as well as by Turkish communities in the European Union and elsewhere.

**COMMUNICATION**

Enquiries can be directed to the Mint's headquarters in Istanbul:

Turkish State Mint  
Dikilitas Mah.Yendogan Sok. No 55  
34349 Besiktas  
Istanbul  
Turkey

Tel: +90-212-370 9000

Website: [www.mint.gov.tr](http://www.mint.gov.tr)



Thousands of jewellery shops also retail Meskuks and Ziynets.



Most Ziynets are sold with a brass hook soldered onto the rim, and a ribbon.



Gifts of Ziynets are often worn by brides and grooms at weddings.



## VISUAL DESCRIPTION

## MESKUK

## OBVERSE



5 Lira

The head of Kemal Ataturk, encircled by the words, "HAKIMIYET MİLLETİNDİR" (sovereignty rests with the nation) and "ANKARA" (the capital city of Turkey).

## REVERSE



2 ½ Lira



1 Lira



1/2 Lira



1/4 Lira

The words "TÜRKİYE CUMHURİYETİ" (Republic of Turkey), encircled by a wreath.

The year date is based on the number of years since 1923, when Turkey was established as a Republic.

The year date changes on 29 October, the date in 1923 when Turkey became a Republic, and the coins are struck with this date until 28 October in the following year.

For example, 1923/86 indicates that the coin was issued between 29 October 2009 and 28 October 2010.

## KEMAL ATATURK

**Kemal Ataturk** (1881 – 1938), President of the Republic of Turkey from 1923 until 1938, is viewed as the "father" of modern Turkey.

After the abolition of the sultanate in 1922, a new constitution was adopted in 1924, Islam was no longer integrated as the State religion, a new code of law was introduced, and the Arabic alphabet was replaced with a modified Latin version.





**ZIYNET****OBVERSE**

5 Lira

The head of Kemal Ataturk, encircled by 32 stars and a decorative design incorporating flowers.

**REVERSE**

2 ½ Lira



1 Lira



1/2 Lira



1/4 Lira

The words, "TURKIYE CUHMHURIYETI" (Republic of Turkey), and the year date (e.g. 2004), encircled by 32 stars and a decorative design incorporating flowers.

The year date changes on 1 January.

Ziynets have included Latin letters and pictures since 1938.

**FEW MARKINGS ON REPUBLICAN GOLDS**

Meskuks and Ziynets do not record the gold purity, weight of fine gold content or legal tender value on their obverse or reverse sides.



**TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION**

**MESKUK**

Category		5 lira	2 ½ lira	1 lira	1/2 lira	1/4 lira
		500 Piastres	250 Piastres	100 Piastres	50 Piastres	25 Piastres
Normal Weight	Gram	36.082	18.041	7.216	3.608	1.804
Gold Purity	%	91.66	91.66	91.66	91.66	91.66
Diameter	Millimetre	35.00	26.00	22.00	18.00	15.00
Fine Gold Content*	Gram	33.07354	16.53676	6.61461	3.30730	1.65365
	Troy Ounce	1.063	0.531	0.212	0.106	0.053

**ZIYNET**

Category		5 lira	2 ½ lira	1 lira	1/2 lira	1/4 lira
		500 Piastres	250 Piastres	100 Piastres	50 Piastres	25 Piastres
Normal Weight	Gram	35.080	17.540	7.016	3.508	1.754
Gold Purity	%	91.66	91.66	91.66	91.66	91.66
Diameter	Millimetre	46.50	40.00	30.00	22.00	18.00
Fine Gold Content*	Gram	32.15432	16.07716	6.43086	3.21543	1.60771
	Troy Ounce	1.033	0.516	0.206	0.103	0.051

Source: Turkish State Mint. \*Based on normal gross weight. GIR calculation in troy ounces: fine gold content in grams divided by 31.10348.

The Meskuk is often described as the “thick” coin, the Ziynet as the “thin” coin.

Meskuk and Ziynet coins, in troy ounce terms, contain approximately 1 oz, 1/2 oz, 1/4 oz, 1/10 oz and 1/20 oz of fine gold.

**BULK PACKAGING**

The Mint delivers Meskuks and Ziynets to customers in sealed plastic bags that contain a standard number of coins with a fine gold weight of approximately 1 kg.

The number of coins per bag varies, according to the size of the coin that had been ordered, as listed below.

Legal Tender Value		MESKUK		ZIYNET	
		Coins in Bag	Fine Gold Weight	Coins in Bag	Fine Gold Weight
Piastres	Lira	Number	Gram	Number	Gram
500	5	30	992.20	31	996.78
250	2 ½	60	992.20	62	996.78
100	1	149	985.57	153	983.92
50	1/2	298	985.57	305	980.70
25	1/4	595	983.92	610	980.70

Source: Turkish State Mint



Thick strips of rolled cast gold.



The strips are used in the process to produce circular blanks for Meskuks and Ziynets.



## ANNUAL MINTAGE STATISTICS: 2000 - 2012

## NUMBER OF COINS

Year	5 Lira	2 ½ Lira	1 Lira	1/2 Lira	1/4 Lira	Total
<b>Meskuks</b>						
2000	6,690	1,080	260,303	32,482	342,720	<b>643,275</b>
2001	6,330	1,140	998,002	28,310	275,097	<b>1,308,879</b>
2002	7,710	1,320	636,528	28,906	315,945	<b>990,409</b>
2003	14,010	1,800	1,337,722	45,296	502,180	<b>1,901,008</b>
2004	15,300	2,220	1,373,793	43,210	485,520	<b>1,920,043</b>
2005	21,990	3,360	1,500,579	52,448	555,135	<b>2,133,512</b>
2006	27,870	3,960	2,797,475	45,892	461,125	<b>3,336,322</b>
2007	29,490	3,480	1,521,737	47,382	505,750	<b>2,107,839</b>
2008	27,540	3,480	1,811,691	35,760	301,665	<b>2,180,136</b>
2009	19,590	2,460	957,921	22,350	146,370	<b>1,148,691</b>
2010	23,100	3,300	1,359,774	28,906	232,050	<b>1,647,130</b>
2011	33,930	3,780	4,156,653	50,660	371,280	<b>4,616,303</b>
2012	16,260	3,240	1,542,746	56,322	254,660	<b>1,873,228</b>
2013	30,840	4,620	4,954,101	71,520	611,660	<b>5,672,741</b>
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>280,650</b>	<b>39,240</b>	<b>25,209,025</b>	<b>589,444</b>	<b>5,361,157</b>	<b>31,479,516</b>
<b>Ziynets</b>						
2000	1,023	183,210	901,170	1,203,530	8,505,840	<b>10,794,773</b>
2001	620	126,046	702,576	854,000	5,622,676	<b>7,305,918</b>
2002	899	150,660	949,059	1,118,740	7,583,520	<b>9,802,878</b>
2003	1,395	231,570	1,480,122	1,575,935	11,117,250	<b>14,406,272</b>
2004	1,798	232,624	1,516,995	1,713,490	10,511,520	<b>13,976,427</b>
2005	2,232	263,562	1,779,543	1,912,960	11,372,230	<b>15,330,527</b>
2006	1,860	278,504	1,924,474	1,813,530	10,835,430	<b>14,853,758</b>
2007	2,883	266,104	2,137,410	2,069,120	12,362,260	<b>16,837,777</b>
2008	2,232	227,044	2,089,980	1,710,440	10,439,540	<b>14,469,236</b>
2009	1,581	143,158	1,168,614	1,039,135	6,418,420	<b>8,770,908</b>
2010	1,829	177,320	1,204,110	1,059,570	7,097,350	<b>9,540,179</b>
2011	1,860	226,610	1,454,112	1,175,165	7,826,300	<b>10,684,047</b>
2012	1,426	143,406	1,480,428	1,209,020	7,949,520	<b>10,783,800</b>
2013	1,426	307,024	2,599,776	1,876,055	17,254,460	<b>22,038,741</b>
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>23,064</b>	<b>2,956,842</b>	<b>21,388,369</b>	<b>20,330,690</b>	<b>134,896,316</b>	<b>179,595,241</b>
<b>Total: 2000-13</b>						<b>211,074,757</b>

Source: Turkish State Mint

211 million Ziynets and Meskuks have been issued since 2000.

In 2013, 22.0 million Ziynets and 5.7 million Meskuks were issued. Total: 27.7 million coins.

**The most popular Ziynet.** The 1.754 g coin (17.3 million) absorbed 50% (27.7 tonnes) of fine gold used in Ziynet fabrication (55.5 tonnes).

**The most popular Meskuk:** The 7.216 g coin (4.9 million) absorbed 93% (32.8 tonnes) of fine gold used in Meskuk fabrication (35.1 tonnes).



The Turkish State Mint has minted 181 million Meskuks and Ziynets since 2000.



**USAGE OF FINE GOLD**

Year	TONNES			TROY OUNCES		
	Meskuk	Ziynet	Total	Meskuk	Ziynet	Total
2000	2.6	26.3	<b>28.9</b>	84,715	846,161	<b>930,876</b>
2001	7.4	18.4	<b>25.8</b>	237,198	589,974	<b>827,172</b>
2002	5.1	24.3	<b>29.4</b>	164,191	782,670	<b>946,861</b>
2003	10.3	36.2	<b>46.5</b>	331,834	1,164,725	<b>1,496,559</b>
2004	10.6	35.4	<b>46.6</b>	339,992	1,156,221	<b>1,496,213</b>
2005	11.8	40.2	<b>52.0</b>	379,420	1,291,978	<b>1,671,398</b>
2006	20.4	40.2	<b>60.6</b>	656,084	1,291,369	<b>1,947,453</b>
2007	12.1	44.6	<b>56.7</b>	388,779	1,435,258	<b>1,824,037</b>
2008	13.6	39.4	<b>53.0</b>	436,195	1,268,007	<b>1,704,202</b>
2009	7.3	23.5	<b>30.8</b>	235,988	756,490	<b>992,478</b>
2010	10.3	25.5	<b>35.8</b>	330,891	819,171	<b>1,150,062</b>
2011	29.5	29.4	<b>58.9</b>	947,236	906,468	<b>1,853,704</b>
2012	11.6	28.2	<b>39.8</b>	366,598	945,922	<b>1,312,520</b>
2013	35.1	55.5	<b>90.6</b>	1,128,875	1,783,832	<b>2,912,707</b>
<b>Total: 2000-13</b>	<b>187.7</b>	<b>467.1</b>	<b>655.4</b>	<b>6,027,996</b>	<b>15,038,246</b>	<b>21,066,242</b>

Source: GIR calculations based on Turkish State Mint statistics. Fine troy ounce: derived from gram weight x 0.9166 divided by 31.10348.

Over the period 2000-2013, 655 tonnes (21.1 million oz) of Meskukus and Ziynets were issued.

In 2013, Ziynets accounted for 61% (55.5 tonnes) and Meskukus 39% (35.1 tonnes) of the gold used in bullion coin fabrication (90.6 tonnes).

**ISTANBUL GOLD EXCHANGE**

Meskukus and Ziynets are produced by the Turkish State Mint from kilobars that are accepted as good delivery by the **Istanbul Gold Exchange**.

The kilobars are manufactured by gold refiners that are accredited to the London Bullion Market Association (LBMA), or by two approved Turkish gold refiners: Istanbul Gold Refinery and Nadir Metal Rafineri A.S.



The Turkish State Mint was relocated to the Yildiz-Besiktas area of Istanbul in 1967.



1000 g  
Istanbul  
Turkey



1000 g  
Nadir  
Turkey



The Istanbul Gold Exchange opened in 1995.





**TOPKAPI PALACE**

The Turkish State Mint minted coins at the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul from 1723 until 1967.

**WORLD'S FIRST GOLD COINS – MINTED IN TURKEY**

**Turkey** is renowned as the country where the world's first gold coins were minted to a standard size and weight.

Refined from electrum (a mixture of gold and silver), which had been mined from alluvial deposits, the coins were minted during the rule of **King Croesus** (561 – 546 BC) in Sardis, the capital of Lydia.

The ruins of Sardis are near Izmir, a port on the Aegean and Turkey's third largest city, about 600 km south of Istanbul.



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**Turkish State Mint**  
**World Gold Council**

Supplementary sources of information  
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