Money Lab Discussion: Meet the Swiss National Bank.

In the Moneyverse's Money Laboratory, students are invited to meet experts from the Swiss National Bank. The Money Lab discussions address current money topics connected to everyday life.

A special opportunity: Swiss National Bank experts provide insights into the bank's areas of responsibility and discuss current developments. Moderated discussions offer space for questions and exploration of the wider context. The focus topic is Cash in the Digital Age. To start things off, Cash in the Digital Age will be discussed with experts from the Swiss National Bank's Market Analysis team.

This topic is closely tied to current events. A stable monetary system forms the backbone of the economy and society. It enables us to trade, exchange, and do business efficiently. Cash plays a central role in this system as a state-guaranteed means of payment.

The Swiss National Bank is responsible for ensuring the supply of cash and facilitating and safeguarding the functioning of cashless payment systems. The payment landscape is undergoing a significant transformation. Taking a closer look at these developments helps students understand the interrelationships and the challenges involved. How does the cash system work? What insights does the Swiss National Bank gain from its market analyses of cash usage and other means of payment? What challenges does the Swiss National Bank face from technological developments and changing payment habits? What is the potential of distributed ledger technology? Could the introduction of a central bank digital currency add value to the current monetary system?

By engaging with experts from the Swiss National Bank's Market Analysis team students receive direct insights into professional practise. In addition to discussing the focus topic, students have the opportunity to learn more about the experts' day-to-day work, areas of responsibility and career paths. This fosters a dialogue that makes economic issues tangible and opens up new perspectives.

Keywords

characteristics of cash, cash conversion cycle, monetary system, two-tier banking system, duality of payment methods, payment systems, market analysis, payment method surveys, network effects, distributed ledger technology (DLT), central bank digital currency (CBDC)

Practical Information

Target audience

The programme is aimed at secondary school level II classes majoring in economics and law, as well as classes focusing on monetary policy.

- **Secondary school,** specialising in economics and law.
- **Career advancement college,** focusing on economics and services.

Group size: max. 28 people
Duration: 90 minutes (excluding check-in/out). Visiting the exhibition independently afterwards is possible.
Language: German

Link to syllabus work

The topic Cash in the Digital Age connects to various secondary school level II curricula and supports both subject-specific and cross-curricular competency areas. It is particularly suitable as an extension of or conclusion to relevant lesson units.

Outcomes

- the students will be familiarized with the factors that make a stable monetary system
- be familiar with the Swiss National Bank's tasks in the context of cash transactions and digital payments
- get to grips with the mechanisms and system components of cash and digital transactions
- be able to discuss current and future challenges relating to cash supply
- be familiar with the characteristics of current forms of money
- be able to explain the opportunities and risks of a central bank digital currency

Level requirements

The Money Lab Discussion requires a basic understanding of economics. It is recommended that students attend this programme as part of the lesson units Money and Finance or Money and Financial Stability. The following prior economic knowledge is recommended:

- Duality of payment methods
- The two-tier banking system
- The tasks of the Swiss National Bank
- The role of commercial banks

Preparation

Two preparatory lessons are recommended to get familiarized with the topic.

Possible preparatory materials:

- Cash Supply and Distribution:
  www.snb.ch/en/the-snb/mandates-goals/cash
- Payment Transactions:
  www.snb.ch/en/the-snb/mandates-goals/payment-transactions
- Payment Methods Survey of Private Individuals:
  www.snb.ch/en/the-snb/mandates-goals/cash/payment-methods-survey
- Payment Methods Survey of Companies:
  www.snb.ch/en/the-snb/mandates-goals/cash/payment_survey_companies/payment_survey_companies-2024
- The Swiss Interbank Clearing (SIC) Payment System – Report on the SIC System and Disclosure Report
  www.snb.ch/en/publications/sicsystem-disclosure/sicsystem-disclosure-all/sicsystem_disclosure_2024

Materials from the following Iconomix modules are suitable for in-depth preparation and follow-up work.

- Money and value: Money and the role of the Swiss National Bank – Explained clearly, comprehensively and vividly (online magazine)
  www.iconomix.ch/de/module/m08
- Money and exchange – Exchanging, calculating, preserving value: The benefits of money (educational game / German) www.iconomix.ch/de/module/m10
- Banks and financial crises – How banks work and how financial crises can arise (video series / German)
  www.iconomix.ch/de/module/v02/inhalt
  Also see the short text in The SNB Explained series: Will the Swiss Franc Soon Only Exist Digitally?
  www.snb.ch/en/snb-explained/cbdc

Organisational Information

- Check-in takes place ten minutes before the start of the programme.
- The teacher in charge is responsible for the discipline of the class throughout the entire visit to the Moneyverse.

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The Moneyverse is an initiative of the Swiss National Bank in cooperation with the Bern History Museum.