



face value	10 zł
metal	925/1000 Ag
finish	proof
diameter	32.00 mm
weight	14.14 g
mintage	60,000 pcs

Obverse: An image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland. The notation of the year of issue, 20-05, on the sides of the Eagle. Below the Eagle an inscription, ZŁ 10 ZŁ. An inscription on the rim, RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA (The Republic of Poland) preceded and followed by five pearls. The Mint's mark, $\frac{m}{w}$, under the Eagle's left leg.

Reverse: The bust of Stanisław August Poniatowski on the left side and the shadow of his profile in the background. An inscription, 3. Maia, / Roku 1791 (3 May, / of the year 1791) above. An inscription in semicircle on the left side, STANISŁAW AUGUST PONIATOWSKI, an inscription in semicircle on the right side, 1764-1795.



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Reverse: The half-figure of Stanisław August Poniatowski. The royal monogram on the right side. On the left side a semicircular inscription, STANISŁAW AUGUST PONIATOWSKI, on the right side a semicircular inscription, 1764-1795.



face value	2 zł
metal	CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy
finish	standard
diameter	27.00 mm
weight	8.15 g
mintage	990,000 pcs

Obverse: : An image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland. The notation of the year of issue, 20-05, at the sides of the Eagle. Below the Eagle an inscription, ZŁ 2 ZŁ. An inscription on the rim, RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA (The Republic of Poland) preceded and followed by six pearls. The Mint's mark, $\frac{m}{w}$ under the Eagle's left leg.

Reverse: The bust of Stanisław August Poniatowski on the left side. On the right side an inscription, 3. Maia, / Roku 1791 (3 May, / of the year 1791). At the top a semicircular inscription, STANISŁAW AUGUST PONIATOWSKI. At the bottom on the right side a semicircular inscription, 1764-1795.

On the edge: An inscription, NBP, repeated eight times, every second time inverted by 180 degrees, separated by stars.

Designer of the coins: *Ewa Tyc-Karpińska*
 Coins struck by the Mint of Poland plc. in Warsaw.

Printed by NBP Printing Office

Design: DECORUM

Coins

– Stanisław August Poniatowski, 1764 - 1795 –



On 18 November 2005, the National Bank of Poland is putting into circulation collector coins depicting king Stanisław August Poniatowski (Stanislaus II Augustus Poniatowski) with the following denominations:

- 100 zł - struck in proof finish in gold, depicting the bust of the king,
- 10 zł - struck in proof finish in silver, depicting the bust of the king,
- 10 zł - struck in proof finish in silver, depicting half-figure of the king,
- 2 zł - struck in standard finish in Nordic Gold alloy, depicting the bust of the king.

The coins are a close of the series „Polish Kings and Princes“ initiated by the National Bank of Poland in 1979, presenting 23 rulers.

Stanisław August was one of the most tragic Polish monarchs. He outlived his country and helplessly witnessed as the neighbouring countries cynically divided the Republic between themselves. After his death, he was harshly judged. Even persons friendly to him call him „King Stan“ („King Stas“) in a familiar and condescending way.

He was born in Wołczyn (now in Belarus) on 17 January 1732. He was christened Stanisław Antoni. His father, a descendant of a middle nobility Poniatowski family, a capable and enterprising man was, in 1752, entrusted with the Republic's highest laic post of the Castellan of Kraków (Cracow). The mother, Konstancja, came from an ancient Czartoryski family, which was, at that time, gaining power and constituted the core of the political party called Familia (the Family). Stanisław was educated at home. At the beginning of his adult life he made an educational trip across Europe which ended with a journey to Saint Petersburg as member of the British mission. On 29 June 1755, he was introduced to the grand duchess Catherine. The meeting initiated a three-year romance. In spite of leaving Saint Petersburg in August 1758, Stanisław remained faithful to Catherine to the end of his days, which influenced a number of his decisions, including political decisions. An intimate relationship with Catherine, who became the empress of Russia in 1762, became decisive for the fact that it was Stanisław August Poniatowski, along with Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski that was put forward as a candidate to the throne by Familia, who at that time was in political negotiations with Russia in connection with the so-called free election. The matter was finally determined by the resignation of Czartoryski from running for the throne and not by the affection of the one-time lover. It was, however, commonly believed that it was the latter factor that prevailed.

The election of Stanisław as king of Poland was preceded by the Convocation Sejm (May – June 1764) held under the protection of the Russian army. The Sejm succeeded in passing the first political reforms: it limited the power of hetmans and introduced the principle of partial collegiality (joint and shared authority) of the public administration. The Russian bayonets ensured a peaceful election (7 October 1764), which, certainly, did not add to the young monarch's popularity.

Stanisław Antoni assumed the names of Stanisław August. There was a political allusion in this fact – a will to unite the compatriots politically at variance after the elections of Stanisław Leszczyński (elected twice) and the election of subsequent Augusts of the Wettin dynasty. Poniatowski, deprived of a strong powerbase, attempted to unite at his side the Republic's groupings that were at variance. The ability to forget and to forgive the recent enemies was his characteristic feature. On the one hand, he was an enlightened, educated and kind monarch, on the other, a man lacking charisma. He was not perceived as „King Piast“ (*Piast* was a Polish royal dynasty with the last king *Kazimierz Wielki*, d. 1370, connoting *grandeur and prosperity of the country*) but as a despised „Dimwit“ (*the Polish word for dimwit is Ciołek, which at the same time is the name of the coat of arms of the Poniatowski family*).

The position of the new monarch was rather complicated. Both Russia and the Familia treated him as their puppet. His ambitions were grand but he lacked political experience. No wonder that the paths of the king and the Familia quickly started to diverge.

The king's life style did not win him sympathy or respect. He was prodigal in his use of funds. He financed the reconstruction of the

Warsaw casting works and the gambling debts of Casanova from his own pocket. He exceeded the budget and sought aid both from the Russian ambassador and from his own butler. Eventually, he became entwined in a financial spiral and was prisoner of his debts till the end of his life. He was a follower of western lifestyle, disdained traditional clothes, his intimate life aroused disapproval.

All the royal faults were criticized by the Confederation of Bar (Konfederacja Barska). Formed in February 1768, the Confederation aimed at defending „faith and independence“ had a clearly anti-Russian character and was directed against the king. His deposition was announced in October 1770, and an unsuccessful attempt to abduct him was undertaken on 3 November 1771. It was an exceptionally difficult time for Stanisław August – the political relations forced him to co-operate with Russia in suppressing the Confederation. The propaganda of the Bar members reflected the emotions of the majority of Polish nobles. The most dramatic political consequence of the Confederation was Poland's first partition in August 1772.

From the very beginning of his reign, Stanisław August tried to support activities aimed at modernizing the Republic. It was at his initiative that a number of manufactures were built, among others, a pottery manufacture in the Belvedere (1768), Wool Manufactures Company (1765), casting works in Warsaw (1765) and Kamieniec Podolski (1770), a mint in Warsaw (1765). He also supported coal mining enterprises and advocated law reform, the so-called „The Code of Andrzej Zamoyski“ (1776). The construction of Ogiński, Royal and Augustowski Canals was started. He was successful as a generous patron with an exquisite taste. He ordered the remodelling of the Royal and Ujazdów Castles, a classical suburban residence, Royal Baths Palace (Pałac Łazienkowski) was erected. He supported Polish architects and painters and hosted outstanding foreign artists at his court. The king initiated intellectual revival by organising the so called „Thursday dinners“ (from 1771) that were attended by artists and scientists invited by him. He supported the formation of the „Monitor“ (1765-85), „Games Friendly and Useful“ (1770-1777), two magazines advocating social reforms in the spirit of enlightenment and tolerance. Himself being a theatre lover he sponsored the national scene created in 1765. He was also a patron of educational reforms and founded the Corps of Cadets and supported the activities of the National Education Commission (1773-1794), the first modern ministry of education in Europe.

Despite his successful activities, the situation of Stanisław August at the beginning of the Great Sejm (1788-1792) was complicated. He was perceived as a Russian ally, an adversary to the alliance with Prussia and, hence, an enemy of the patriotic party. Persistence, belief in small steps policy and flexibility led to an exceptional success, i.e. the adoption of the May 3rd Constitution (1791). Stanisław August Poniatowski was its main author. In the face of the war with Russia (1792), in spite of the fact that the king did not personally lead the army, he proved to be emotionally involved by establishing the Order of the Virtuti Military.

However, the unfortunate decision to accede to the Targowica Confederation, a movement of adversaries to the May 3rd Constitution, shattered the years of tedious political work. It should be stated categorically that the king's accession to the Targowica Confederation (July 1792) was not a betrayal. The king made a decision following a meeting with his closest constitutional collaborators gathered in the Law Guard. They approved of the step as the king's accession was to be an element of a political game

aimed at taking control by the reformers over the Confederation. The manoeuvre failed, however, and the former royal collaborators, who were preparing grounds for a future national insurrection, blamed Stanisław August for everything. The signing of the Targowica Confederation Act meant the king's political death.

Stanisław August was unable to prevent the tragedy of another partition (June 1793) and remaining unaware of the details of insurrection activities throughout the Insurrection (from March to October 1794) he was only a figurehead fearing for his own safety. The third partition (October 1795) only required his formal approval of the lawlessness. He was taken to Grodno, put in check with the threat of refusing to refund his huge debt and agreed to abdicate (25 November 1795) and leave for Saint Petersburg without putting any resistance.


He died in Saint Petersburg on 12 February 1798 and was buried in the Polish Church of St Catherine. In 1938, in view of the plans to pull the church down, the Soviet authorities handed his ashes over to Poland and the coffin was placed in a church in Wołczyn. This fact initiated a lively discussion about the proper place of his burial. A symbolic burial of the king took place in St. John's Archicathedral in Warsaw on 14 February 1995.

Małgorzata Karpińska
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All coins issued by the NBP are legal tender in Poland.



face value	100 zł
metal	900/1000Au
finish	proof
diameter	21.00 mm
weight	8.00 g
mintage	4,200 pcs

Obverse: An image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland. The notation of the year of issue, 20-05, on the sides of the Eagle. Below the Eagle an inscription, ZŁ 100 ZŁ. An inscription on the rim, RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA (The Republic of Poland). The Mint's mark, , under the Eagle's left leg.

Reverse: The bust of Stanisław August Poniatowski on the left side. The royal monogram on the right side. Inscription on the rim at the top, STANISŁAW AUGUST PONIATOWSKI, inscription on the rim at the bottom, 1764-1795.