

● The National Bank of Poland is putting into circulation coins commemorating the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of liberation of KL Auschwitz-Birkenau:

**2 zł** struck in standard finish in Nordic gold,  
on **21 January 2010**,

**100 zł** struck in proof finish in gold,

**10 zł** struck in proof finish in silver.

on **22 January 2010**.

## The National Bank of Poland

holds the exclusive right to issue the currency  
in the Republic of Poland.

In addition to coins and notes for general circulation,  
the NBP issues collector coins and notes.

Issuing collector items is an occasion to commemorate  
important historic figures and anniversaries, as well  
as to develop the interest of the public in Polish culture,  
science and tradition.

Since 1996, the NBP has also been issuing occasional 2 złoty  
coins, struck in Nordic Gold, for general circulation.

All coins and notes issued  
by the NBP are legal tender in Poland.

COINS ISSUED IN 2010 COINS ISSUED IN 2010



Information on the issue schedule  
and on how to purchase  
the coins can be found  
at the [www.nbp.pl](http://www.nbp.pl) website

The coins have been struck at the Mint of Poland in Warsaw.

Edited and printed: NBP Printing Office

# NBP

National Bank of Poland

# coins



65<sup>th</sup> anniversary  
of liberation  
of KL Auschwitz-Birkenau

# 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of liberation of KL Auschwitz-Birkenau

- Auschwitz-Birkenau, German Nazi concentration and extermination camp was liberated on 27 January 1945 by the soldiers of the Red Army. The fighting for the liberation of the town of Oświęcim and the nearby camp took the lives of more than 230 Soviet soldiers.
- The Auschwitz (Polish name: Oświęcim) concentration camp was established in mid-1940 as the number of detained Poles in German-occupied country kept rising. The oldest part of the camp, the so-called mother camp (Auschwitz I) was established at the site of old military barracks.
- In the autumn of 1941 in the nearby Birkenau (Brzezinka) village, the Germans started the construction of the second part of the camp. It was called Auschwitz II (or Birkenau). At a given point in time it accommodated almost 100 thousand inmates. This was where the majority of the extermination infrastructure was built – including gas chambers and crematoria. The Birkenau camp played the main part in carrying out the genocide called by the Nazis 'final solution of the Jewish question'.
- Apart from the Auschwitz I and Auschwitz II camps there were also auxiliary camps. These, established at industrial facilities and farms, were intended to exploit camp prisoners for slave labour. The biggest was the camp at the Buna factory in Monowitz (Monowice). Since 1943 it was called Auschwitz III or KL Monowitz. This is how an extensive network of three main camps: Auschwitz-Birkenau-Monowitz, with accompanying satellite camps was created.

Main camps as well as satellite camps were surrounded by barbed wire and watchtowers.

- Most of the prisoners in the initial period of the existence of the camp were Poles but there were also some Germans, who were chiefly intended to act as functionaries within the camp. Also citizens of other occupied countries were sent there.
- Since the beginning of 1942 Auschwitz was the main centre of the extermination of Jews. Such a decision was due to the proximity of sizable Jewish population. Auschwitz-Birkenau became the destination point of transports from the ghettos of the whole occupied Europe. As late as 1944, Germans gassed hundreds of thousands of Jews here, most of them coming from Hungary.
- Other killing methods were also used. The SS men shot prisoners under the 'death wall' or killed them with phenol injections. In reprisal for escape attempts prisoners were condemned to death by starvation. This is how the Franciscan Maksymilian Maria Kolbe died in 1941 r., when he volunteered to die in place of his fellow prisoner. Dozens of thousands of prisoners lost their lives as a result of the appalling living conditions, hunger, diseases and exhausting work. Many persons died due to purported "medical experiments" carried out by SS doctors.
- Presumably 1 300 thousand people were deported to this camp (including ca. 1 100 thousand Jews and 140–150 thousand Poles), however only ca. 400 thousand persons were registered. Hundreds of thousands of Jews marched to gas chambers were not included

in the statistics. The total number of victims at Auschwitz amounted to ca. 1 100 thousand persons. Around 1 mn (90 %) were Jews. There were also 70–75 thousand Poles, 21 thousand Roma, 15 thousand Soviet prisoners and 10–15 thousand of prisoners of other nationalities who perished in the camp.

- In spite of extremely difficult conditions, as early as 1940 organized undercover activity was developing among prisoners in Auschwitz. One of its key figures was Witold Pilecki, who – in order to get into the camp – let himself be detained during a roundup in Warsaw. Information from members of resistance movement acting in and around Auschwitz were filtered to the West. Some prisoners managed to escape, there were even rebellions, all bloodily suppressed by the SS.
- In mid-January 1945, in the face of a Soviet offensive, an order of camp liquidation was issued. 56 thousand prisoners were marched out of Auschwitz. This 'death march' cost the life of thousands of victims. Hundreds of them, left in the camp due to their inability to walk, died of disease, exhaustion or were killed by SS men.
- The Auschwitz camp was liberated by the troops of the First Ukrainian Front of the Red Army. The liberators found traces of the crimes, including prisoners' corpses, blown up crematoria and heaps of objects robbed from the victims of the biggest death factory in history.

Tadeusz Kondracki

COINS ISSUED IN 2010 COINS ISSUED IN 2010 COINS ISSUED IN 2010 COINS ISSUED IN 2010 COINS ISSUED IN 2010 COINS ISSUED IN 2010 COINS ISSUED IN 2010



FACE VALUE **100** ZŁ

metal **Au 900/1000** ■ finish **proof** ■ diameter **21.0 mm**  
weight **8.0 g** ■ mintage (volume) **8,000 pcs**

**OBVERSE:** At the top a semicircular inscription: 65. ROCZNICA OSWOBODZENIA /65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of liberation/. On the left the image of the Eagle, established as the state emblem of the Republic of Poland. On the right an inscription: KL AUSCHWITZ-/BIRKENAU. Below, an inscription: 100/ZŁ and the notation of the year of issue: 2010. Over the Eagle stylized images of three fence posts. In the background a stylized image of the camp crematory and the outline of a building with the entrance gate. At the bottom a semicircular inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA /Republic of Poland/. The Mint's mark: M/W, under the Eagle's left leg.

**REVERSE:** Centrally an image of a boy in a cap and a coat, with David's star on the chest. In the background a stylized image of a building at the entrance gate to the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp and the rails leading to the camp. At the top a semicircular inscription: FABRYKA ŚMIERCI /death factory/. Below an inscription: BIRKENAU.

Coin designer: **ROBERT KOTOWICZ**



FACE VALUE **10** ZŁ

metal **Ag 925/1000** ■ finish **proof** ■ diameter **32.0 mm**  
weight **14.14 g** ■ mintage (volume) **80,000 pcs**

**OBVERSE:** At the top a stylized image of the inscription over the entrance gate to the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp: ARBEIT MACHT FREI /work makes you free/. Below, against the background of the camp buildings, a stylized image of a fragment of a fence post and barbed wire. On the right hand side the image of the Eagle, established as the state emblem of the Republic of Poland. Under the Eagle, the notation of the year of issue: 2010. Below an inscription: ZŁ10. On the left side, an inscription: 65./ROCZNICA /65th anniversary/. In the rim inscriptions: OSWOBODZENIA KL AUSCHWITZ-/BIRKENAU /of the liberation of KL Auschwitz-Birkenau/ and in the opposite direction: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA /Republic of Poland/. The Mint's mark: M/W, under the Eagle's left leg.

**REVERSE:** In the centre an image of the bust of Witold Pilecki, in striped prison uniform, against the background of a stylized image of the fence of the concentration camp and a fragment of a watchtower. On the left an inscription: WITOLD/PILECKI. At the bottom an inscription: KL Auschwitz/4859. In the rim an inscription: TWÓRCA ZWIĄZKU ORGANIZACJI WOJSKOWEJ /the founder of the Union of Military Organization/.

Coin designer: **ROBERT KOTOWICZ**



FACE VALUE **2** ZŁ

metal **CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy** ■ finish **standard** ■ diameter **27.0 mm**  
weight **8.15 g** ■ mintage (volume) **1,000,000 pcs**

**OBVERSE:** An image of the Eagle established as the state emblem of the Republic of Poland. On the sides of the Eagle, the notation of the year of issue: 20-10. Below the Eagle, an inscription: ZŁ 2 ZŁ; in the rim, an inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA (Republic of Poland), preceded and followed by six pearls. The Mint's mark: M/W, under the Eagle's left leg.

**REVERSE:** In the centre stylized images of three prisoners from the painting 'Phantoms are coming back' by Czesław Leniewski. Above, an inscription: 65., below a stylized image of the inscription over the entrance gate to the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp : ARBEIT MACHT FREI /work makes you free/. At the top, a semicircular inscription: ROCZNICA OSWOBODZENIA /anniversary of liberation/. At the bottom a semicircular inscription: KL AUSCHWITZ-/BIRKENAU.

**ON THE EDGE:** the inscription: NBP, repeated eight times, every second one inverted by 180 degrees, separated by stars.

Obverse designer: **EWA TYC-KARPIŃSKA**  
Reverse designer: **ROBERT KOTOWICZ**