



face value	<b>200 zł</b>
metal	<b>900/1000Au</b>
finish	<b>proof</b>
diameter	<b>27.00 mm</b>
weight	<b>15.50 g</b>
mintage	<b>4 400 pcs</b>

**Obverse:** On the right side the image of the Eagle established as the state Emblem of the Republic of Poland, against the background of a stylised disc with starlets. Around, the inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA [the Republic of Poland] and notation of the year of issue: 2004, as well as the inscription: 200 Zł, separated by starlets. The Mint's mark:  $\frac{m}{w}$  under the Eagle's left claw.

**Reverse:** In the central part a disc with a stylised map of Europe, on the right side a stylised map of Poland, and against this background five vertical lines extending across the entire coin. Around, the inscription: WSTĄPIENIE POLSKI DO UNII EUROPEJSKIEJ [Poland's Accession to the European Union].



face value	<b>10 zł</b>
metal	<b>925/1000 Ag and paints: white, red, blue and yellow</b>
finish	<b>proof</b>
diameter	<b>32.00 mm</b>
weight	<b>14.14 g</b>
mintage	<b>78 000 pcs</b>

**Obverse:** In the central part the image of the Eagle established as the state Emblem of the Republic of Poland. Around the Eagle, yellow stars against the blue background. On the rim the inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA and notation of the year of issue: 2004, as well as the inscription: 10 Zł, separated by starlets. The Mint's mark:  $\frac{m}{w}$  under the Eagle's left claw.

**Reverse:** In the central part the joined flags of Poland and the European Union. Around, the inscription: WSTĄPIENIE POLSKI DO UNII EUROPEJSKIEJ [Poland's Accession to the European Union], completed by a starlet.



face value	<b>2 zł</b>
metal	<b>CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy</b>
finish	<b>standard</b>
diameter	<b>27.00 mm</b>
weight	<b>8.15 g</b>
mintage	<b>1 000 000 pcs</b>

**Obverse:** The image of the Eagle established as the state Emblem of the Republic of Poland, on the Eagle's sides notation of the year of issue: 20-04, under the Eagle the inscription: Zł 2 Zł, on the rim the inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA [Republic of Poland] preceded and completed with six pearls. The Mint's mark:  $\frac{m}{w}$  under the Eagle's left claw.

**Reverse:** In the central part, a stylised map of Poland and seven stars in semicircular trajectory arising below. Above, a semicircular inscription: WSTĄPIENIE POLSKI (Poland's Accession), and on the background of the map in the lower part, the inscription: DO / UNII EUROPEJSKIEJ [to the European Union].

**On the edge:** The inscription: NBP repeated eight times, every second one inverted 180°, separated by starlets.

*Designer of coins: Ewa Tyc-Karpińska*

# Collector Coins



Design: DECORUM

*Coins struck by the State Mint in Warsaw.*

*Printed by NBP Printing Office*

– Poland's Accession to the European Union –

On April 26, 2004, the National Bank of Poland is putting into circulation collector coins commemorating Poland's Accession to the European Union, of the following face values:

- 200 zł – struck in gold, in proof finish,
- 10 zł – struck in silver, in proof finish,
- 2 zł – struck in standard finish, in CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy, i.e. Nordic Gold

### Poland – The European Union - Europe

On May 1, Poland became a member of the European Union. For Europe then overcame its long standing division and the EU took on a shape Europe's Founding Fathers dreamt of. Indeed, Europe's future will hereafter unfold together with Poland. Which is to say that the postulates of the Hague Congress (May 8-10, 1948) – 56 years after their formulation – have come to fruition. Therein, the free nations of Europe demanded freedom for the peoples of Europe held captive by communism, proclaiming, "...we refuse to accept as permanent the barriers which now separate us from our fellow Europeans in the rest of the Continent. We must continue ceaselessly to hope and work for the unity of all Europe".

For long years the labour on behalf of stabilization and prosperity – carried out in the name of respect for human rights and the dignity of citizens – embraced only the western part of Europe. Because of the division acceded to at Yalta (February 4-11, 1945) and the decisions of the Soviet Union, Poland and the other countries of Central Europe could not take advantage of the Marshall Plan. An iron curtain descended and separated Western Europe from Eastern Europe. The divide between the poor East and the rich West deepened ineluctably. It was not until Poland's revolutionary Solidarity movement (August, 1980) against the country's communist rulers and the hegemony of the Soviet Union that a series of changes were initiated that redirected Polish history and European geopolitics. Diplomatic relations between Poland and the European Economic Community (EEC) were officially established in September 1988. On June 4, 1989, for the first time in decades, Poles were able to participate in genuine elections and express their desire to belong to the democratic community of European states. On September 19, 1989 Poland signed the landmark Agreement on Trade and Commercial and Economic Cooperation with the EEC. On November 9, 1989 the Berlin Wall – that quintessential symbol of the Cold War – came tumbling down. On December 16, 1991 the signing ceremony took place of the Europe Agreement establishing an Association between the European Communities and their Member States and the Republic of Poland. At the very same time Hungary and f. Czechoslovakia also concluded such treaties.

The preamble to those "Europe treaties" contained Poland's credo regarding her future in Europe and the future of the European Union. Poland declared her pursuit of membership in

the European Union and her will to contribute to the construction of a strong and cohesive Europe, a Europe of common cause. That heading and purpose steadied the course over the long and difficult negotiations for Poland's membership in the EU. They began on March 31, 1998 and were concluded on December 13, 2002. The final stretch of Poland's efforts to be admitted to the EU had begun on April 16, 2003 in Athens, where the accession treaty was signed. Once it was ratified by all the EU's fifteen member-countries, that treaty granted the people of Poland – as a free European nation – the right to full EU membership.

Europe and the European Union are two distinct ideas. Europe arose in the late medieval period and acquired a shape, which has endured to this day. The European Union represents the organizational achievement of European individuals and nations in striving to create an optimal structure for the accommodation of their varying interests. It was decided that the original political objective – to achieve peace and stability and strengthen democracy in war-torn Western Europe – would be pursued through economic integration. The foundation of that effort was laid with the European Coal and Steel Community (April 18, 1951) along with Euroatom and the European Economic Community (the Treaties of Rome, March 25, 1957). Other Communities came thereafter, notably those on tariffs, economics, and monetary union. In time the European Economic Community, originally comprised of six members, developed into the European Union of fifteen members. New treaties were signed that expanded the founding treaties, significant among them those signed at Maastricht (Feb. 7, 1992), Amsterdam (Oct. 2, 1997) and Nice (Feb. 26, 2000).

The attainment of Europe's desired political objectives would have been largely impossible but for the initiatives of the Founding-Fathers of the European Communities, namely, Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Alcide de Gasperi and Konrad Adenauer. Poles were barred from being among the co-founders of Europe's new structures, but during WW II, Poland's London-based government-in-exile under Prime Minister Władysław Sikorski advanced concepts for the unification of the European continent and Poland's role in the structures of Europe. His position was supported by all political groupings (except the communists). The subsequent creators of Europe's Communities spoke of Józef Hieronim Retinger, a key advisor to General Sikorski, as an author and pioneer of European integration.

In joining the European Union Poland has contributed her own federal tradition, one faithful to the principle of member-state identity. This of course concerns the Union of Lublin (1569) which created the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Moreover, Poland has also contributed her own tradition as a state heeding the rigors of parliamentary government and constitutionalism. Indeed, as early as the late 15th century Poland had a bicameral parliament comprised of Sejm and

Senate. Poland's Constitution of the Third of May, 1791 was Europe's first, and the world's second modern constitution (after the United States'). But alas, the exemplary traditions of Polish statecraft were destroyed when Poland lost her independence at the close of the 18th century.

Membership in the European Union represents a huge and historic opportunity for Poland of a kind that may well be compared with her recovery of independence in 1918. For EU membership defines anew Poland's geostrategic place in Europe, buttresses her democratic institutions and permits her a role in co-determining the function of EU institutions and in charting Europe's future. Poland's new place in Europe opens up economic opportunities that – just as they once did for older EU members – will give rise to growth and balanced economic development. For it signifies a step toward modernization, improving economic competition and entering the Euro-zone. Taking advantage of those opportunities – in the form of structural assistance, the influx of foreign investment and the deep restructuring of the agricultural sector – is in Polish hands.

European integration has largely achieved the goals embarked upon over a half-century ago. For future historians, May 1, 2004 will mark the beginning of a new Poland in a new European Union, one comprised of 25 states. Let us hope that the course of events from 1945 to May 1, 2004 will be remembered as a turnaround in the history of Europe that will both bespeak a cautionary tale and provide a beacon for the undertakings of the 21st century's visionaries. But they need remain mindful of the words spoken in 1949 by that great European Paul-Henri Spaak, "*Let us, however, beware of complacency or over-optimism. The machinery of a United Europe has been set up, but the most vital problems still remain to be solved*".

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