

● On **7 September, 2011**, the National Bank of Poland is putting into circulation coins commemorating Silesian Uprisings, with the following face values:

10 zł struck in proof finish, in silver,

2 zł struck in standard finish, in Nordic Gold.

The National Bank of Poland

holds the exclusive right to issue the currency
of 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.

NBP

National Bank of Poland

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COINS ISSUED IN 2011 COINS ISSUED IN 2011



Information on the issue schedule can be found at the
www.nbp.pl/money
website.

Collector coins issued by the National Bank of Poland
are sold in the Kolekcjoner service (Internet auction/Online shop)
at the following website:

www.kolekcjoner.nbp.pl

 **KOLEKCJONER**

and at the NBP regional branches.

The coins were struck at the Mint of Poland in Warsaw.
Edited and printed: NBP Printing Office

Silesian
Uprisings

Silesian Uprisings

● In 1918 the newly restored Polish state grappled with numerous problems, one of them being the fluid character of Poland's borders. Their final shape had to be either negotiated or established by force, whereby diplomatic demands had to be supported with armed action. Such is the background to the three Silesian uprisings.

● Upper Silesia was a remarkable part of the German state – most of its inhabitants spoke Polish, or rather a local dialect of the language. This, however, did not unequivocally determine their nationality. The national identity of Upper Silesians kept tending, alternately, towards the Polish or the German element.

● Germany's defeat in World War I and the surge of revolutionary sentiment in its wake left a deep mark on Upper Silesia. Ethnic clashes, which had been mounting for some time, got a fresh impulse from the emergence of a Polish state with claims to this industrialised region with vast potential.

● At the end of 1918, the Polish population of Upper Silesia started forming People's Councils; at the same time Upper Silesian deputies participated in the session of the Partition Sejm of Poznań. It was inevitable that the Polish-German conflict should exacerbate. Indeed, it came to a climax during the summer of 1919, when a spate of strikes unfolded in support of the national and social cause.

● Counter-activities by pro-German groups prompted into action some of the local Polish Military Organisation (PMO) members. On the night of 16 August 1919, the first armed operations took place

(the First Silesian Uprising). Badly coordinated fighting occurred mainly in the areas with the highest percentage of Polish population – the Pszczyna (Pleiss) and Rybnik counties. The command of the uprising was assumed by the head of Upper Silesian PMO Alfons Zgrzebnik. The initial modest success did not transform into an overall victory – the cities remained unconquered, Poland failed to provide support. In the face of the Germans' overwhelming advantage, on 24 August Zgrzebnik gave his troops the order to discontinue operations.

● Notwithstanding the military defeat, Poles triumphed in the local elections of 1919. In February 1920, the allies took control of Upper Silesia with a view to launching a plebiscite to determine the region's sovereignty. As arguments of the two sides clashed during the pre-plebiscite campaign, the Germans, who controlled the local police, proved to have more clout. Under the circumstances, Alfons Zgrzebnik gave a signal to armed struggle on 19 August 1920 (Second Silesian Uprising). This time, the operation was much better planned and its most important goal was achieved – the German police were disbanded and a Polish-German force created in its stead. However, it did not produce the final resolution of the problem.

● This was to have been achieved through the plebiscite scheduled for 20 March 1921. Due to many factors, partially brought in by the Poles themselves (such as the demand to grant the right

to vote to those born, but not residing in the plebiscite area), 59.6% of the votes cast were in favour of Germany. The German element prevailed in the Western counties and in the cities. The eastern part of the region and the rural areas opted for Poland.

● As the allies continued to disagree on the interpretation of the plebiscite results, Wojciech Korfanty, head of the Polish Plebiscite Commissariat gave the signal to another, third uprising. It started on the night of 2 May 1921 and involved fully-fledged military operations. These aimed to reach the so-called Korfanty line, i.e. the proposed Polish-German border. With the benefit of surprise, the troops were able to achieve this goal already in the first week of combat.

● German counteroffensive, although unable to tip the balance of the struggle, threatened to break through insurgents' lines. Under the circumstances, the allies decided to step in and force the warring parties into an armistice. Hostilities ultimately ceased by the end of July.

● In 1922, as a result of a division of Upper Silesia instituted after the uprising, 70% of the territory remained on the German side of the border. At the same time, the bulk of the local mining and metal industry fell to Poland. When Upper Silesia joined Poland, it became its exceptionally rich part.

Grzegorz Bębnik

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FACE VALUE **10** ZŁ

metal **Ag 925/1000** ■ finish **proof** ■ diameter **32.00 mm**
weight **14.14 g** ■ mintage (volume) **50,000 pcs**

OBVERSE: In the centre, stylized fragment of a map of Silesia within the boundaries in accordance with the territorial demands presented after the 1921 plebiscite in Upper Silesia. Against the backdrop of the map, stylized fragment of Silesian landscape. On the right, image of the Eagle established as the emblem of the Republic of Poland. Below the Eagle, on the right, inscription: 10 ZŁ. At the bottom, against the map, notation of the year of issue: 2011. On the left and right of the map, semicircular inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA. Below the Eagle, on the right, the Mint's mark: M/W.

REVERSE: In the centre, stylized images of three Silesian insurgents, composed into the outline of the fragment of map of Silesia. From top downwards, descending inscriptions: 1921/1920/1919. Surrounding, inscription: POWSTANIA ŚLĄSKIE.

Coin designer: **GRZEGORZ PFEIFER**



FACE VALUE **2** ZŁ

metal **CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy** ■ finish **standard** ■ diameter **27.00 mm**
weight **8.15 g** ■ mintage (volume) **800,000 pcs**

OBVERSE: On the right, image of the Eagle established as the emblem of the Republic of Poland. At the sides of the Eagle, notation of the year of issue: 20-11, below the Eagle, inscription: ZŁ 2 ZŁ. Surrounding, inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA, preceded and followed by six pearls. Below the Eagle, on the right, the Mint's mark: M/W.

REVERSE: Stylised images of Silesian insurgents. At the top, inscription: 1919 1920 1921. At the bottom, inscription: POWSTANIA/ ŚLĄSKIE.

ON THE EDGE: An inscription: NBP, repeated eight times, every second one inverted by 180 degrees, separated by stars. and right semicircular

Obverse designer: **EWA TYC-KARPIŃSKA**

Reverse designer: **GRZEGORZ PFEIFER**