On 4 September 2002 the National Bank of Poland puts into circulation collector’s coins depicting the bust of king August II the Strong of the following face values:

- 10 zł - struck in silver, in proof finish;
- 2 zł - struck in standard finish in CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy, the so-called Nordic Gold.

The coins are a continuation of the series "Galaxy of Polish Kings and Princes" initiated by the National Bank of Poland in 1979.

Elector of Saxony Frederick Augustus of Wettin house, later on named August II the Strong, was born on 12 May 1670 in Dresden as a son of Elector John George III and Anne Sophia, Danish princess. He lived his youth in times of the most intense rise of the influences of French king Louis XIV, visiting courts of Western Europe. He participated in a war with France (in years 1689-92) and Turkey (in years 1695-96). The person of Louis XIV and French model of absolutism constituted for him, as a Saxon elector and later on Polish king, an example to follow.

On the edge an inscription: NBP eight times repeated, every second one turned by 180°, separated by stars.

Obverse: An image of the Eagle as the state Emblem of the Republic of Poland, on the Eagle’s sides a notation of the year of issue: 20-02, an inscription under the Eagle: Zü 10 Zü, in the rim, an inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA preceded and tipped with five pearls. Under the left talon of the Eagle the Mint mark: Ø.


On the edge an inscription: NBP eight times repeated, every second one turned by 180°, separated by stars.

Obverse: An image of the Eagle as the state Emblem of the Republic of Poland, on the Eagle’s sides a notation of the year of issue: 20-02, an inscription under the Eagle: Zü 2 Zü, in the rim, an inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA preceded and tipped with six pearls. Under the left talon of the Eagle the Mint mark: Ø.


On the edge an inscription: NBP eight times repeated, every second one turned by 180°, separated by stars.

Designer of the coins: Ewa Tyś-Karpinska

Coins were struck by the State Mint SA in Warsaw.

Printed by NBP Printing Office
renowned for its recent glorious victory over Turkish army at Vienna, made possible for August to dream about independence from Habsburg emperors by winning hereditary crown outside Reich, by instance in one of former fiefs of the Polish Republic. During election most of the gentry voted French candidate, prince de Burbon Conti, while Conti’s adversaries united their forces and with Russian and Austrian support, on 27 June 1697, acclaimed Frederick August of Wettin house Polish king. Polish election revealed main power feature of August II as a politician – consistency and fast acting. After election – not waiting for an initiative of the majority’s favourite candidate, prince Conti – on 27 July August took pacta conventa vows (i.e. agreement between the gentry and newly elected king defining main political and financial obligations of the elect), and on 15 September he crowned himself on the castle of Wawel as August II.

Once he gained rule he intended to transform his state into monarchy by the example of Luis XIV. He dreamed about Polish-Saxon union, hereditary throne for the Wettins in the Polish Republic, enhancing royal power, and in the consequence creating great, strong empire under the rule of his successors. The projects contained many advantageous elements for the Polish Republic, among other things conquering Moldavia, Silesia, Livonia and Courland for the sake of a future empire. With all their attractive points they did not however take into consideration international realities. On one hand Poland feared about German domination, on the other hand religiously fanatic Saxons stood in awe of forced religious conversions (i.e. change of religion) by the newly christened king according to Roman Catholic order. The successful realization of these plans hindered also the lack of direct frontier between both countries.

As for the foreign affairs August II initially continued proceedings of the king Jan III Sobieski, while domestically aimed to develop trade and industry, education, reorganize the army and enhance the monarch’s position. These plans were successfully put into practice in Saxony which under his rule lived a period of industrial and cultural bloom. While in Poland his intentions, especially those regarding introduction of succession to the throne and enhancing royal power, met with strong opposition from the part of the Polish gentry attached to its privileges. This resistance grew more after August II, as a Saxon elector, had declared a treaty with Russia. At last the king’s projects involved the Polish gentry, it is also August II aimed to create new nobility. It is him to relinquish the crown in a shameful way. Planning initially to use Peter I as an instrument of one’s own politics he became at last a ruler who was formally and practically dependant from Russia. August the Strong not only was unable to carry out his recurrently interesting projects, but many of them ended up with results contrary from those planned initially. Efforts of reforms consolidated conservative public feeling and averison to all sorts of reforms became rooted for a long time in the gentry’s hearts and minds.

August II played a significant role as a patron of culture, especially architecture; Dresden owes him many beautiful buildings, especially Zwinger palace, while Warsaw has among other things the so-called Saxony Axe, palace along with Saxon Garden and palace of Brühl. The monarch granted a permission to Piarists for establishing in Warsaw the first nation wide buildings, especially Zwinger palace, while Warsaw has among other things the so-called Saxony Axe, palace along with Saxon Garden and palace of Brühl. The monarch granted a permission to Piarists for establishing in Warsaw the first nation wide newspaper „Kurier Polski“, „Polish Messenger“.

In 1705 August II instituted the first Polish distinction – the Order of White Eagle.

August II the Strong featured unbelievable physical strength (hence his byname) and exuberant temperament, his life was full of verve and imagination.

He died at night on 31 January by 1 February 1733 in Warsaw.