

**NBP**

Narodowy Bank Polski

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# Bankoteka

NBP Money Centre Magazine



*Dear Readers,*

The inauguration of the NBP Money Centre in memory of Sławomir S. Skrzypek is due in mid-March 2016. The establishment of this modern educational facility, unique in its kind in the country, is one of the largest investment projects of NBP.

The latest issue of the “Bankoteka” magazine features an interview with Professor Eugeniusz Gatnar, member of the NBP Management Board, chairman of the Steering Committee of the NBP Money Centre, responsible for the implementation of this project. Mr Gatnar acquaints the readers with the activities of the Committee, introduces them to the challenges of managing such a complex undertaking and confirms the timely completion of the investment.

The latest issue of the “Progress report on the creation of the NBP Money Centre” tracks the progress of adaptation work in the exhibition space.

In the permanent “Exhibits” section we continue the series of articles devoted to the past and present of money: “In money you read the epoch”, and “History of everyday material life in the exhibitions of the NBP Money Centre”. The current issue of “Bankoteka” brings the readers back to the times of pre-war passbooks and dollar coupons issued by the People’s Republic of Poland. We also write about stock market speculation – its mechanisms and consequences for the economy will be presented in more detail in one of the exhibition rooms of the Centre.

Although busy with completion work, the Money Centre has prepared an exhibition entitled “The wartime fate of the Polish gold”, hosted by successive NBP branches. Thanks to this initiative, thousands of visitors were able to learn about the dramatic odyssey of Polish gold through many countries and continents until the post-war return of the treasure to Poland. The newest issue of “Bankoteka” features accounts from Kielce, Zielona Góra and Łódź.

In the “Money museums of the world” section we invite you to the Museum of Coins and Medals of the National Bank of Slovakia, where you can acquaint yourself with the history of money in our neighbouring country and visit temporary exhibitions.

Our next temporary exhibition, to open in autumn, will reflect the comprehensive scope of the nascent NBP Money Centre in anticipation of its inauguration. Enjoy the exhibition, and, of course, enjoy the reading of the latest issue of our “Bankoteka” magazine.

*Dariusz Jadowski  
Director  
Education and Publishing Department*

# Idea

## Interview

### **Shining a light on the mystery of money...**

Interview with the Chairman of the Steering Committee of the NBP Money Centre, Member of the NBP Management Board, Professor Eugeniusz Gatnar **pp. 4-5**





# Shining a light on the mystery of money...

## Interview with the Chairman of the Steering Committee of the NBP Money Centre, Member of the NBP Management Board, Professor Eugeniusz Gatnar

*You are the Chairman of the Steering Committee which is managing the project of the NBP Money Centre following a decision of the NBP Management Board. What is involved in the supervision of such a large and responsible task?*

In terms of budget size, the NBP Money Centre is the second largest investment project in Narodowy Bank Polski. The project structure, with a specified budget, a schedule and a competent project team, seems to me to be the most appropriate in the case of this project. This was my objective and the condition of my accession to the implementation of this task.

The role of the Chairman of the Steering Committee of this project results from the exercise of supervision over the Education and Publishing Department, in whose organizational structure the Money Centre is operating, on behalf of the President of NBP.

*Various NBP departments are cooperating in the implementation of the project. What is their contribution to the creation of the Centre?*

The NBP Money Centre is an inter-department project. Three departments are crucial for its implementation: the Education and Publishing Department (EPD), the Administration Department (AD), as the entity responsible for the investment part of the project, and the Information Technology & Telecommunications Department (ITD), which exercises supervision over the equipment in electronic devices and

manages its functioning. I would like to add, that this project is a sophisticated IT project due to the large number of multimedia devices and the educational presentations linked with the exhibition. The Steering Committee consists of three people who are supervising the activities of the Project Team. Along with me it includes the director of the Education and Publishing Department Dariusz Jadowski and the director of the Administration Department Ewa Smulewicz. The Project Team is led by Ferdynand Ruszczyk, the director of the Money

**Difficult issues concerning money, such as for example currency unions or payment systems will be presented in an attractive and accessible way.**

Centre office in the Education and Publishing Department. An important role in this team is played by the contract coordinator on behalf of the Administration Department – Barbara Kozłowska, who is an architect with experience in the execution of such large exhibition projects, from the construction project all the way to the selection of the exhibits. Piotr Śliwowski from the Warsaw Uprising Museum, the author of over a dozen exhibition projects, who serves as an external expert, is also providing invaluable assistance.



*Prof. Eugeniusz Gatnar*  
*Photo by Włodzimierz Dąbkowski*

*Is the implementation of the project proceeding according to schedule? The planned opening date is in just over six months.*

Yes, we're looking at the near future with optimism. The construction part of the project should be completed in October of this year, in accordance with the agreement with the contractor. The Polish consortium TRIAS and ZBiD, the general contractor selected through tender procedures, has assured us, that the deadline will be met. That company has implemented several similar projects including the Historical Museum of the City of Kraków, located in the underground beneath the Main Square.

*...Whoever has visited the Museum of the City of Kraków once wants to keep coming back.*

I hope that the Money Centre will also be a place where our guests will want to come back. Our educational facility will be equally as friendly for the visitors. Difficult issues concerning money, such as currency unions

or payment systems, will be presented in an attractive and accessible way. Multimedia, quizzes, animations and touch screens will inspire the youth. The exhibition is designed in such a way as to intrigue the visitors. A good example is the transparent ATM or the inside of a cash transit vehicle.

The guests visiting the Money Centre will be shown around by a team of educators with

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**Many believe, that economics, knowledge about money and banking is secret knowledge. Our task in the NBP Money Centre will be to transfer knowledge about money and its role in the economy.**

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appropriate knowledge and skills enabling them to pass on this knowledge in a way adapted to the level of the visitors: primary school students, secondary and post-secondary school students but also university students. Following the opening of the facility, we will modify the exhibition based on our own analysis of the guests' experience and reviews.

Getting back to your question concerning the date of the opening of the Money Centre. The completion of the construction work is planned for October of this year. After that the Centre will be filled with content and exhibits and tests will be carried out. The official opening will take place in mid-March 2016.

*How do you see the position of this educational facility and its role in increasing the knowledge of finance and economics among Polish society?*

Many believe that economics, the knowledge about money and banking, is some sort of

secret knowledge. Our task in the NBP Money Centre will be to transfer knowledge about money and its role in the economy. There is currently a growing interest in these matters. The financial crises or the issue of Greece's exit from the monetary union (the euro area) are shaping the public imagination inspired by the media and are generating an ever-increasing interest.

The artistic dimension of the exhibition gives us reason to hope that the difficult information will be presented in a way that will be accessible and interesting and thus easy to understand.

The NBP Money Centre will be the only place of its kind in Warsaw and in Poland where knowledge about finance, money and banking will be presented in a comprehensive way; it will be a unique economic education facility. There are some museums with extensive numismatics collections, such as the Emeryk Hutten-Czapski Museum in Kraków. Our Centre will, on the one hand, show the changes in the forms of money over the centuries: from commodity money to contemporary electronic money, and on the other hand, present these changes in a broad historical, social and economic context.

I believe that the Money Centre should fulfil three important functions: that of an educational facility, of a museum and of a research centre.

The educational function will be implemented mainly through the exhibition and the educational materials.

We understand the museum function as professional care of the NBP numismatics collections. In fact, Narodowy Bank Polski has one of the largest numismatics collections in Poland, consisting of approx. 280,000 exhibits, including approx. 30,000 single items.

The Centre will ensure the proper storage, cataloguing, conservation and constant replenishment of the collection.



*The "Stock exchanges" module*

*Visualization by KiPP Projekt*

I would add that only about 1,000 coins will be exhibited in the room called "Numismatist's study". The remaining collections will be presented in temporary exhibitions.

The research function will be carried out through the gathering of documents and archiving of materials related to Polish banking and the history of money in Poland.

These three areas should be supervised by the Scientific Council, whose members will include distinguished professors of science.

The NBP Money Centre is a big task both in terms of investment and content. It will ultimately affect the public perception and understanding of the world of modern finance. Its concept was originated by the tragically departed President of NBP Sławomir S. Skrzypek.

■ *Interview by Stanisław Gorący*

# Chronicle of the creation of the Money Centre

## Photo report

Report from the Centre's "construction site" pp. 7-9



# Report from the Centre's "construction site"

**In the previous issue of the "Bankoteka" magazine (March 2015) we presented the commencement of construction work in the exhibition space of the Money Centre. Although the work is still underway, it is getting easier to imagine just how the individual rooms will finally look.**

In the photograph (Photo 1) we can see the room intended for the module devoted to the creators of money. All the wiring has already been laid. This is the last moment to see the internal structure of this room because soon the whole area will be covered by flooring and the decorations will be installed.

**Work on the construction site of the Centre is picking up speed and the interiors are taking a more defined shape.**



*Photos 2 and 3*

*Photo 1*



In turn, the "Antiquity – Middle Ages – Modern Times" module is almost completed. It is characterized by multimedia wells, which allow the visitors to look into the depths of history. They have been designed in such a way as to resemble transversely intersected ancient columns, as shown in the visualization prepared by KiPP Project (Photo 3). On the photo from the "construction site" (Photo 2) we can already see the place prepared for their assembly, as well as an outline of the future shape of the floor and the frames for the installation of the glass showcases visible in the background. Following the completion of the investment, these showcases will house the exhibits associated with the development of money from ancient Greece up to the 17th century.



An impressive portal has been erected between the “Banking Street” and the “Central Bank” modules (Photos 4 and 5). It represents the characteristic elements of 19th century architecture. Its decorations were prepared manually by a group of artists employed specifically for this purpose.

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**It can even take several months of work to make a single decoration.**

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*Photo 4*

New structures, showcases and devices will shortly be installed in other rooms of the Centre. We will present them in the next report.

- *Report by Jacek Wownysz*  
*Photos by Włodzimierz Dąbkowski*  
*Visualizations by KiPP Project*



*Photo 5*



# Exhibits

## History of everyday material life in the exhibitions of the NBP Money Centre

Coupons and dollar vouchers... or the means of payment in the  
Polish People's Republic  
Anna Brzyska **pp. 10-12**

## In money you read the epoch

Savings books – the books of life  
Przemysław Wiśniewski **str. 13-15**

The stock exchange – where money turns into securities and the  
other way round  
Jakub Lang **str. 16-18**



# Coupons and dollar vouchers... or the means of payment in the Polish People's Republic

“Boże coś Polskę ustawił w ogony” (God who hath placed Poland in queues) – wrote the poet Miron Białoszewski, ironically illustrating the most distinctive feature of the social image of the Polish People's Republic. The constant shortages of goods, empty store shelves, queues and administratively imposed forms of “regulation” of demand and consumption

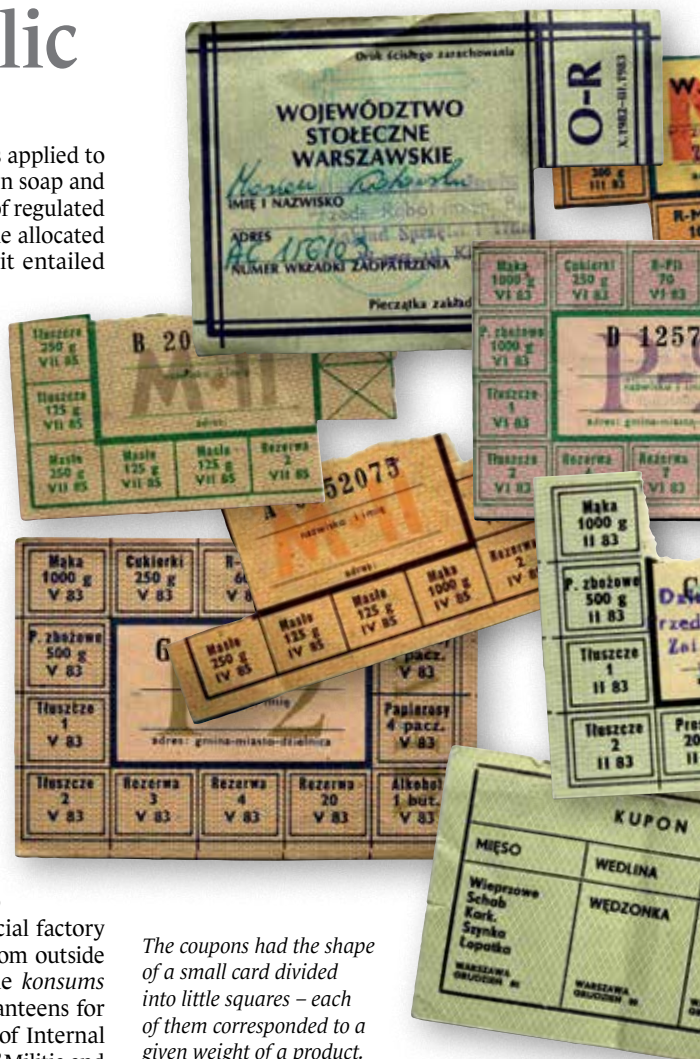
and fats. Subsequent restrictions applied to the sale of sugar, sweets and even soap and washing powder. The purchase of regulated goods in quantities exceeding the allocated ration was possible; however, it entailed the necessity of paying double prices (these were so-called commercial prices).

One example of the unequal distribution of goods was also the so-called “konsums”, or special factory stores commonly known as the “stores behind yellow curtains”.

became the hallmarks of the economic landscape of the times. In this situation, the system of rationed supply to the population was supposed to be an answer to the economic crisis and the chronic shortages of goods.

Rationing, which had been in place since the end of the war, the prohibition of serving meat dishes in eating establishments on certain days of the week and the centrally established limits on the purchase of sweets were all supposed to be temporary. In fact food coupons on selected goods were abolished in 1948, but the authorities reintroduced the system of food rationing in the years 1951-1953. The increased expenditure on the expansion of heavy industry and armaments inevitably led to the limitation of consumption and market supply problems. Initially, coupons were introduced for meat, meat products

The lack of balance in the market supply was confirmed by various forms of preferential treatment of specific social and professional groups (such as miners) as well as people from the government authorities (including, among others, prominent communist party figures and their families). One example of unequal distribution of goods were also the so-called “konsums”, or special factory stores, inaccessible to anyone from outside the given plant or factory. The *konsums* formed a chain of stores and canteens for the employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the officers of the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service. They were commonly known as the “stores behind yellow curtains”.



*The coupons had the shape of a small card divided into little squares – each of them corresponded to a given weight of a product. At the counter the saleswoman would cut off the appropriate square box.*



## Food coupons

In 1976, in a situation of deteriorating market supply and shortages of many basic consumer goods, the authorities decided to reintroduce coupons and limit the sale of sugar. Special commodity vouchers for sugar enabled the purchase of 2 kg per month. In addition, a network of commercial shops was opened where scarce goods (including meat and smoked meat) could be bought at higher prices.

Following the signing of the so-called August Agreements in 1980, the economic situation in the country rapidly deteriorated, because the wage increases won by the protestors were not reflected in the amount of goods available on the market. The authorities decided to introduce food vouchers once more. Initially, the rationing only applied to meat, but the scope of regulation was quickly extended to other products. The demand for meat rationing was the 13th of the famous 21 demands of the striking shipyard workers [Introduce coupons – food vouchers for meat and meat products (until the situation on the market is under control)]. The coupons were supposed to guarantee the purchase of basic quantities of the necessary products (especially meat) and reduce the inconveniences related to shopping.

As observed by the economist and participant of the “Round Table” talks Krzysztof Hagemejer (Społeczeństwo w kolejce. 1981): “From the point of view of the people, the coupons were supposed to ensure fair distribution and reduce queues. From the point of view of the authorities and the economic policy, they were supposed to be an effective tool for balancing supply with the demand of the population”.

However, the possession of coupons did not always guarantee the purchase of the expected quantity of the goods or even the purchase of any goods at all. Despite the lengthening queues, shops were empty and the only article that didn't disappear from the shelves was... vinegar.

The principles for the allocation of goods in the rationing system depended on many criteria, such as age, health, work-related effort and general living conditions. For example, belonging to a certain age group (infants, children, adults) determined the type and quantities of goods allocated on the coupons. Special “O” coupons for infants enabled the purchase of semolina, sugar, powdered milk, cotton wool, soap and baby oil. In turn, the allocation of washing powder and soap was higher for the citizens of Katowice, due to the miners working underground.

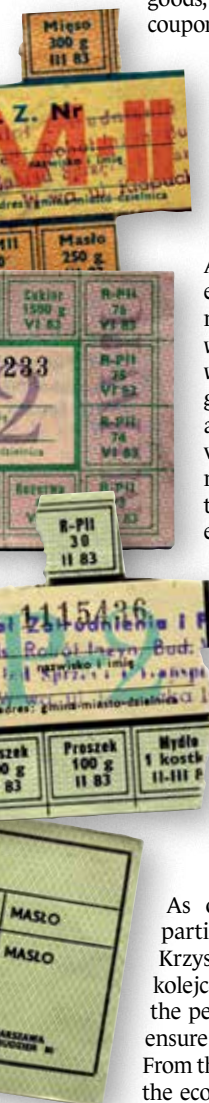
When the authorities introduced coupons for vodka in the autumn of 1981, the production of moonshine in the country reached impressive volumes: already in the first half of the 1980s more than 150,000 moonshine-making facilities were operating. According to official statistics, they manufactured at least 30% of the alcohol consumed in the country. It is no surprise, therefore, that alcohol, treated as a scarce commodity, played the role of a substitute currency. As Emil Broniarek (an underground printer) recalled: “It was just like money. I don't think there was a single apartment, where someone wasn't making moonshine. Sugar was turned into moonshine, and then you could get anything in return for that”.

In March 1982 the authorities introduced supply coupon books, known as the “coupons for coupons”. The issue of a supply coupon was registered in the personal identity document and the collected vouchers were entered into the supply coupon book. The coupons were issued by various institutions – for example, work places issued coupons

for workers, universities – for students, and local administration bodies – for retirees. Coupons for milk for infants were collected from the healthcare institutions and those for petroleum were collected at PZU (the Universal Insurance Company). Registry Offices issued special certificates enabling newlyweds to purchase wedding rings. Additional rations enabling the purchase of alcohol were allocated only in the case of important family events such as a wedding or a christening.

## Dollar vouchers

The coupons allowed for the purchase of certain goods, but they did not replace the ordinary means of payment, which meant that the goods purchased this way were paid for with money. The dollar vouchers functioning in the Polish People's Republic and widely regarded as a substitute means of payment, were an entirely different phenomenon.







Bank Pekao issued the first cent and dollar vouchers as early as the 1960s. They were issued to people who were either paid in dollars or received convertible currency (dollars) from their families living abroad. The vouchers could be used to pay in the stores of the “Pewex” Internal Export Company network and the “Baltona” stores. These were commercial establishments conducting the official sale of both imported goods and domestic products which were not sold on the normal market. Pewex differed from normal stores in that the available assortment could be purchased without queues, and outside of the rationing system. In many people’s accounts, Pewex was seen as “a temple of consumptionism” – a place where the shelves bent under the weight of varied and scarce goods. The goods sold there included spirits, cigarettes, sweets, shelf-stable foods, clothes, toys, cosmetics, household appliances and even cars, furniture and other goods. In the times of the Polish People’s Republic, the products from the Pewex chain became a symbol of luxury and special privileges. It is worth recalling that in the 1970s a pair of jeans cost 8-10 dollars, while the average salary was the equivalent

of 15-20 dollars (!). And it was precisely the payment in dollars and the high prices that rendered shopping at Pewex so exclusive and made dollar vouchers so desirable.

### The political authorities determined the functions and the *de facto* value of traditional money.

Throughout the history of the Polish People’s Republic, the authorities rarely managed to satisfy the basic needs of the market. The average citizen often had difficulty in obtaining the most important groceries and goods of everyday use. The causes of the shortages lay in the very foundations of the command economy, in which the state had a monopoly on the manufacture and sale of almost all the products available on the market. In light of the serious supply difficulties, the introduction of the coupon system, which was supposed to ensure the purchase of the basic quantities of

essential products according to established principles, was seen as an element of social justice. In reality the economic model of the Polish People’s Republic was not able to predict the real needs of the citizens or ensure that the allocated products found their way to the store shelves. Moreover, it was the political authorities who determined the functions and the *de facto* value of the traditional money. As a result, instead of alleviating the chronic shortages and counteracting the economic crisis, the adopted mechanism generated queues and the special allocations of goods were only available to a select few. It was not surprising, therefore, that “the permanent shortage of goods developed a hunter’s instinct: some goods were to be hunted, and in colloquial Polish language the verb ‘buy’ became synonymous with ‘manage to obtain’. And so Poles were hunting everywhere and at all times, sometimes without even knowing what they were hunting for” (P. Wieczorkiewicz, J. Błażejowska *Przez Polskę Ludową na przelaj i na przekór*).

■ Anna Brzyksa  
“Polish People’s Republic” module

# Savings books – the books of life

This was long ago, so long, in fact, that some don't even want to remember. But those whose memory has retained independence and clarity (with the exception of details), may remember the small icons between the texts printed in the newspaper "Express Wieczorny" (The Evening Express). The icon presented a prayer-book, a Polish United Workers' Party membership book and a PKO savings book. It was assumed that these three books were present in our homes. The leaders of the country wished for at least one of these books to disappear. The Word became flesh and the party membership book dematerialized. The savings book has similarly dematerialized, but for completely different reasons. The dematerialization of the prayer-book should not be expected; however, its contents concern the essence of dematerialization.

The above paragraph on past history will serve us in the considerations about money and our relationship with it. We have lived with it or dealt with it for some ten centuries. Virtually from the times of Boleslaus the Brave up until the present day we have been grappling with metal discs decorated with digits, letters and timeless symbols. We have ascribed them with a specified value, which surprisingly hasn't changed much despite the passage of years.

The book of life known as the savings book, passbook, bank book or deposit book, is, however, something entirely different. To borrow a metaphor, it is our stern, just and cruel controller.

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**The savings book was a discreet representation of the money that we owned and patiently gathered. We demonstrated to ourselves and to the environment that we were managing our assets wisely.**

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When the savings book emerged in the first decades of the 19th century, it was and remained a miniature of a banking book, where how much we owed and how much our contractors owed us was entered into the columns "Nostro" and "Loro". Both columns had to



*Sign from the 1930s*  
NBP Collection

be balanced up to the last penny. We could not spend more than we had. Everything had to match. Let us recall a principle applicable in the olden days in the Wielkopolska region, when young people were taught the rules of savings. They were told to raise two fingers up, like at school. The middle finger represented what you had and the index finger that what you could spend. It was all so simple!

The savings book always guarded our thinking and our management of money. It recorded our weakness, indecision and pursuit of items seen in the advertisements. The savings book did not have a "debit" column. Cashless transactions are also familiar with this concept; however, the shiny plastic document does not have coloured diodes lit in green, yellow and red. The savings book is like a bank clerk from the old days, who – much like a doctor examining the "health" of our book – passed definitive judgments, that saved us from profligacy.

In the Money Centre module named "Banking Street" we will present more than 130 years of the history of this small book with columns inside, showing our resourcefulness, thriftiness and frugality. Great History is also contained in the pages of these books. Here, for example, is a savings book from Gdańsk, from the early 1920s. It contains a record of deposits in the Polish mark, which functioned

as a valid currency only for several months. Another impressive item are three savings books belonging to a mother, a father and their daughter. Two generations patiently saved small amounts of money. This used to be known as the culture of saving or the banking culture. It was talked about and was the subject of priests' exhortations from the pulpit. It was spoken about and encouraged at the cooperative stores, during shopping for basic necessities like salt and bread. The more resourceful neighbour was a model to follow. This is how things were outside the big cities. The savings book was also a document of our own national identity, in cases where the closest neighbours, the Germans, the Ukrainians or the Jews were more resourceful and better organized. One had to be better, more frugal and resourceful. We can see this activity in the savings books shown on Banking Street.

### Biographies from the banking books

Deposit book No. 1719 of the Bank of the Association of Commercial Companies (Bank Związku Spółek Zarobkowych) branch in Lviv, issued for Professor Maksymilian Thullie, the Rector of the Polytechnics School in Lviv.

Thanks to the meticulous entries, we can retrace his activities, income and expenses. Thanks to the detailed records, we can gain knowledge about the man, his life and his character. Maybe this was the idea inspiring the creator of the small icon in the Evening Express fifty years ago? Each of the books included there showed the man and the time in which he lived and worked. The labourer and the professor, the teacher and the store owner.

Here is the biography of the owner of savings book No. 1719:

Engineer, rector of Lviv Polytechnic School, Senator of the Republic of Poland. He came from a French family that settled in Poland in the 18th century. His great-grandfather Tadeusz Thullie was the last Secretary of King Stanisław August Poniatowski.

Maksymilian Thullie was born in Lviv on 16 January 1853. He began his education at a communal school in Monasterzyska and later attended the Franz Josef Gymnasium in Lviv, which was the only one with Polish as the language of instruction at the time.

He was a prominent authority in the field of theory of bridge construction. He authored the first Polish handbooks concerning the construction of bridges of all types. He was the dean of the Faculty of Engineering and the Faculty of Hydraulic Engineering at the Polytechnic School in Lviv, and later served as its rector on two occasions. He was strongly involved in the activities of Christian Democracy and he presented his political opinions literally

*ex cathedra*. That is why the liberal circles led by Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński nicknamed him “Holy Thullie”. He was also the person who drew the attention of the Polish public to the works of the previously unknown and debuting writer and painter Bruno Schulz, the author of the famous “Cinnamon Shops” and “Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass”. The professor and senator ran into the exhibition of Schulz's drawings by accident. He found the exhibited works “scandalous, indecent and frankly pornographic” and demanded the exhibition to be closed. The exhibition wasn't closed and Schultz became famous.

After Poland regained independence, he actively participated in the organization of teaching at the Warsaw University of Technology. He participated as an expert surveyor in the construction of the



*The savings book of Maksymilian Thullie NBP Collection  
NBP Collection*





*In the years 1918-1939 savings books had various names  
NBP collection*

Prince Józef Poniatowski bridge in Warsaw. A plaque bearing his name is hanging on one of the bridge's spans near the Powiśle station.

Along with his scientific work, he was also actively involved in the development of Polish technical vocabulary.

He died on 1 September 1939 as a result of shock caused by the outbreak of the war.

He was buried at the Łyczakowski Cemetery on 3 September 1939. His name is included on a memorial plaque in the building of the Senate honouring the Senators of the Republic of Poland who were murdered, killed, went missing and died during World War II and the postwar period of repression.

■ Przemysław Wiśniewski  
"Banking Street" module



Photo Wikimedia Commons

# The stock exchange – where money turns into securities and the other way round

**Stock market speculation is seen in a very negative light in Poland. This is a remnant of the times of socialism. In a market economy speculation provides the liquidity of the financial markets.**

The stock exchange, which is a special part of the capital market, is a place where a variety of financial instruments are traded, including, among others, stocks, bonds and futures. On the capital market there is no physical transfer of property, but only a transfer of property rights. Securities are a vehicle serving this purpose.

The capital market fulfils a number of important functions in the economy – It enables entrepreneurs who want to make investment to raise capital, which translates into the development of various branches of the economy and the growth of employment. On the stock market we can also trade in securities and make a profit on the differences

in the price of their purchase and sale. This is usually referred to as speculation.

The history of speculation on stock markets is almost as old as the first capital markets themselves. The economic sense of speculation consists in predicting the future prices and carrying out transactions in such a way as to achieve the highest possible profits. This type of behaviour existed from the beginning of the functioning of the money and goods economy. Each investor operates according to the same principle: to buy the given asset cheaply and sell at the highest possible price.



"Tulip Book" of 1637 by P. Cos  
Photo Wikimedia Commons



Pamphlet on the Dutch tulip mania  
Photo Wikimedia Commons

The first mention of speculation dates back to the times of ancient Rome, where futures contracts were used to secure transactions on the commodity market. However, in the absence of detailed documents from the epoch it is hard to determine what the market actually looked like and who the speculators at the time were. The first places of mass trade in goods and securities started emerging only several centuries later, with the development of trade and the increase in money turnover. They were known as exchanges and were supposed to facilitate the transactions between the parties. Over time, new instruments also emerged, which





Image from the collection of the Tate Gallery in London.

E.M. Ward: *South Sea Bubble*, 1846,

Photo Wikimedia Commons

were used purely for risk management. Today we know them under the name of derivative instruments.

The first mass use of this type of instrument occurred during the Dutch speculative fever, known as the tulip mania. People were trading in tulip bulbs, which, during their peak popularity, reached prices higher than many houses in Amsterdam. It is difficult to determine when this speculative mania began. Thanks to contemporary accounts, we know that the rapid growth in the prices of tulip bulbs took place in the years 1634-1637. The crash which occurred in the tulip market in 1637 caused mass bankruptcy of many people investing in this product, or rather speculating on its prices.

There have been many similar cases in history. Let's take for example the speculative bubbles of the South Sea Company of 1721

or the experiments with the issue of paper money, which led to the biggest financial crisis in the 18th century in France.

The most well-documented examples of speculative bubbles occurred in the United States from the beginning of the 19th century to the great depression of the 1920s. The economy in the USA endured cyclical booms and busts on the local financial market. In the years 1819-1919 there were fourteen significant busts on the capital market, which also translated into a crisis in the economy. The mechanism was the same in each case: the pumping of the prices of assets popular at the given moment (that is, those which provided above-average rates of return on the invested capital), finally a turning point in this trend and then... a big bust. After a while, this mechanism was renewed and returned in the form of other assets popular at a given time. This was exactly how the



Crowds in front of the New York Stock Exchange  
*The great depression*, 1929.

Photo Wikimedia Commons

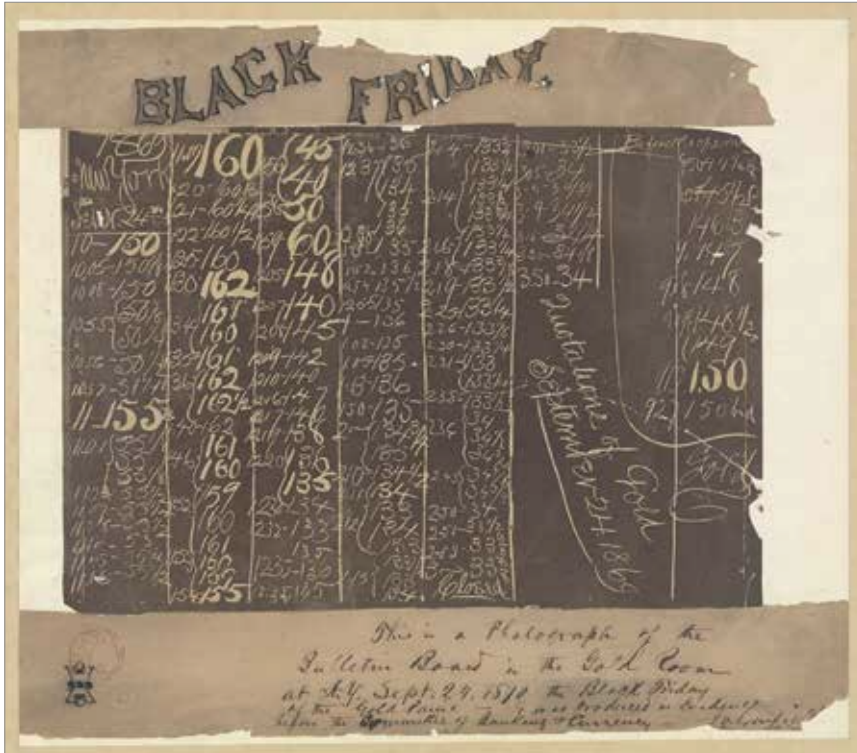


*Jose De La Vega.*

*Author of the oldest book on the stock exchange:  
Confusion of confusion*, 1688

Photo Wikimedia Commons





Stock exchange quotations in the USA on “Black Friday” (24.09.1869) – the day of panic on the gold market and the mass bankruptcies during the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant.

Photo Wikimedia Commons

great market busts were perceived by Jesse Lauriston Livermore, the legendary Wall Street speculator from the 1920s.

His story has been described by the journalist Edwin Lefevre in the legendary book “The Reminiscences of a Stock Operator”. Based on his own experience, Livermore claimed that the human psyche and the herd instinct of the investors are immutable, and that the only thing that changes are the assets that are most attractive on the market at the given moment.

However, it also happened in the history of the stock market that great fortunes were

made thanks to skilful speculation, which were later transformed into huge companies able to invest in technological innovations of great significance. One such success was the career of Camillo Castiglioni, the son of a Rabbi from Trieste, who made a fortune on trade transactions, and then on speculation on currencies and securities on the stock exchanges in Germany and Austria-Hungary. He used the earned money for the development of the aviation and automotive industry. This was how the BMW brand of passenger cars came about.

An equally interesting story concerns the pioneer of the American automotive giant

General Motors. The company was created by William Durant, the son of wealthy timber merchants from Massachusetts. Durant was a true visionary. In 1908 he created a huge industrial holding company controlling car manufacturers as well as related component manufacturing companies. In 1910 he invested in the Chevrolet brand. The money that he accumulated in the industry, was used for great speculation on the New York Stock Exchange. Along with the Rockefeller family, Durant made a fortune on the crash of 1929, buying out the stocks of failing businesses for cheap and then reselling them at a premium. The end of his career came along with the crash of 1936, when he made risky investments, overestimated his chances and lost the fortune.

Speculation is now so common that it’s hard to distinguish it from skilful investing in the stock market financial instruments. There are many opinions, however, very often confirmed by the facts, that speculation is like a game of roulette. When we know the market well – we can predict its behaviour, but the result is almost always independent from us, because we never have a full picture of the situation.

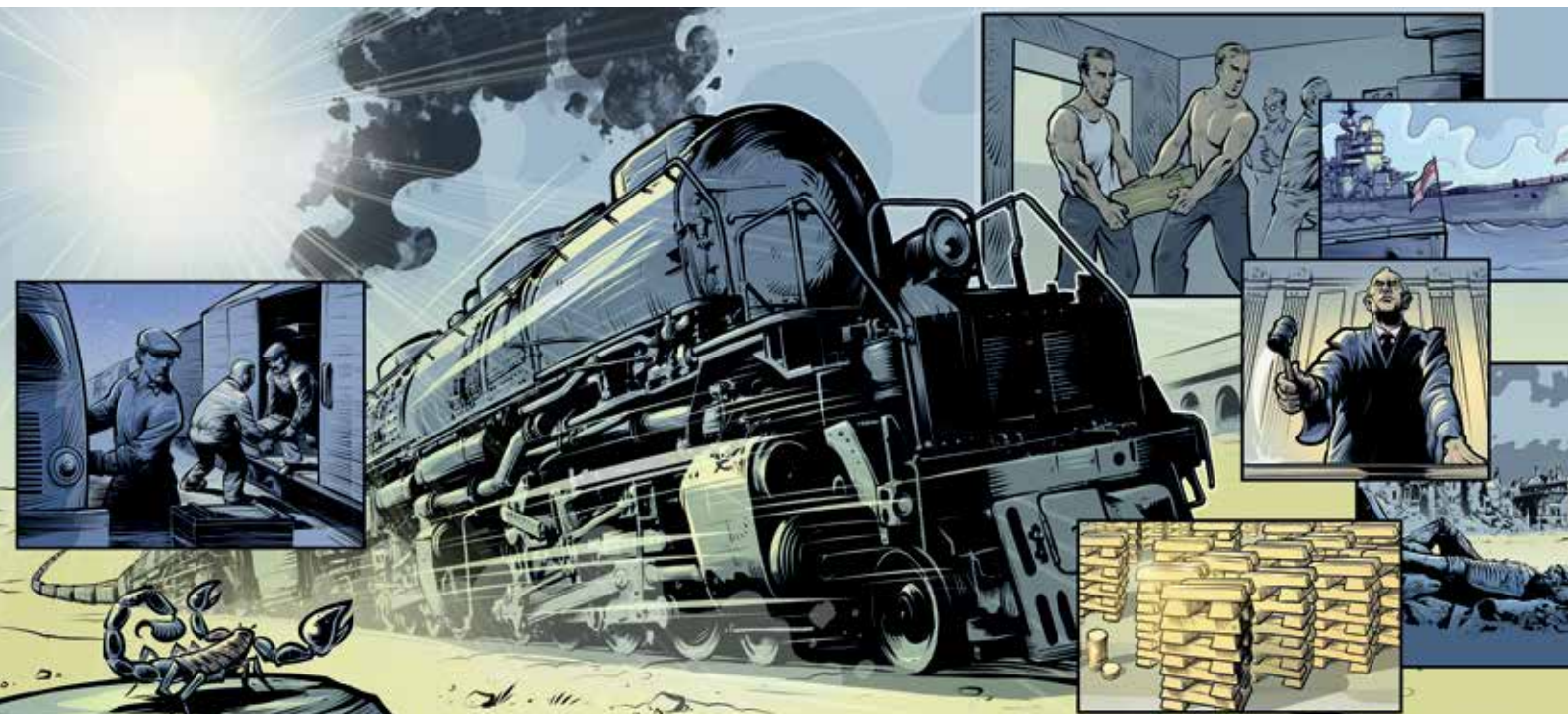
Speculation in securities is not only the domain of professional financiers managing huge funds. People involved in speculation also include actors (like Arnold Schwarzenegger) and musicians (the rapper 50 Cent). It is true that in the era of trading on the Internet almost everyone among us can become a financial speculator. On the market there are many brokerage offices offering online investment accounts enabling us to speculate on currencies, stocks, precious metals, and even cryptocurrencies. We are living in a time of genuine financial democracy. We should remember, however, that freedom of action does not exempt us from the obligation of anticipating the consequences of our actions.

■ Jakub Lang  
“Stock exchanges” module

# Exhibitions of the NBP Money Centre in regional branches

The exhibition entitled *The wartime fate of the Polish gold* has begun its journey through the Regional Branches of NBP. Reports from Kielce, Zielona Góra, Łódź

pp. 20–22



# Exhibition in Kielce, the highlight of the Open Days



*Secondary school students from Kielce and the Świętokrzyskie region visiting the exhibition*

*Photo NBP Regional Branch in Kielce*



*Guests of the Open Days visiting the exhibition – participants of the “Save the Polish gold” role playing game*

*Photo NBP Regional Branch in Kielce*

The exhibition entitled “The wartime fate of the Polish gold” which was presented in the NBP Regional Branch in Kielce from 6 May to 22 June 2015, enjoyed great interest of the visitors. This unique exhibition perfectly fit into the theme of this year’s NBP Open Days, which took place in our branch between 8 and 14 June.

Gold is an exceptional metal which has attracted the attention of people for centuries. This year was no different. The exhibited gold bar traditionally generated great interest, both among the customers of the bank and the people visiting the attractions prepared for the Open Days. We were aware, however, that very few people know the fascinating story of the evacuation of the Bank of Poland’s resources during World War II. Therefore we were not surprised by the large number of visitors and the reaction of our guests to the exhibition entitled “The wartime fate of the Polish gold”, prepared by the NBP Money Centre and constituting one of a series of educational

exhibitions about the history of money and the institutions associated with money.

The exhibition was viewed by a total of approx. 3,500 school students and their guardians as well as private individuals. The guests visiting the exhibition as well as the participants of the “Save the Polish gold” role playing game praised the way the exhibition was presented and its factual contents. The “Bankoteka” publication, containing interesting materials dedicated to the fate of the Polish gold during the war, proved a valuable supplement to the exhibition. It served as a guide to the exhibition, a souvenir for the visitors, and a competent and comprehensive source of knowledge to be used during history lessons for the teachers and the educators.

■ *Anna Sapalska*  
*NBP Regional Branch in Kielce*



# Exhibition in Zielona Góra – expedition into the unknown past

The exhibition “The wartime fate of the Polish gold” which was presented in the NBP Regional Branch in Zielona Góra from 6 May to 11 June 2015, proved to be a great success. In connection with the NBP Open Days which took place from 16 to 22 of May 2015 it enjoyed huge interest among the visitors and was the main highlight of this year’s Open Days.

The organized tours that visited our branch were impressed and surprised by the wartime history of the Polish gold, which as it turns out, was thus far only widely known among history enthusiasts. During the Open Days a game was incorporated into the exhibition. With the help of cultural organizers it transported the visitors to the days of the

evacuation of the Polish gold. It presented and revealed the secrets and intricacies of the operation carried out, among others, by the employees of the Bank of Poland in the form of learning through play.

The special edition of the “Bankoteka” magazine, which served as the exhibition catalogue, proved to be a nice souvenir for the visiting youth. School students said that it would also be useful in discussing the journey of the Polish central bank’s gold during World War II and in writing school essays.

■ Przemysław Goździewicz  
NBP Regional Branch in Zielona Góra



*Organizers showing school groups around*  
*Photo NBP Regional Branch in Zielona Góra*



# Exhibition in Łódź – contests about the evacuation of gold

The exhibition entitled “The wartime fate of the Polish gold” in the NBP Regional Branch in Łódź was visited by 2,500 people from the city of Łódź and the Łódź region. The visitors included the pupils from the 5th and 6th grade of Primary Schools No. 44 and No. 26 in Łódź as well as students from the Public Secondary School No. 26 in Łódź.

The visitors viewing the exhibition not only learned in depth about the history of the Polish gold in the form of a comic strip presented on the boards of the exhibition, but could also see the movie entitled “Secure reserves. The history of the Polish gold”. The employees of the branch showed the visitors around the exhibition.

Contests about the evacuation of the Polish gold were also organized during the presentation of the exhibition. The contest questions referred to the facts and dates presented in the exhibition, but also in the above mentioned film. The prizes in the contests were collector coins issued by NBP.

■ Sławomir Kabza  
NBP Regional Branch in Łódź



*There was no shortage of people eager to see the movie  
Photo NBP Regional Branch in Łódź*



*In addition to school groups the exhibition was popular among individual visitors  
Photo NBP Regional Branch in Łódź*



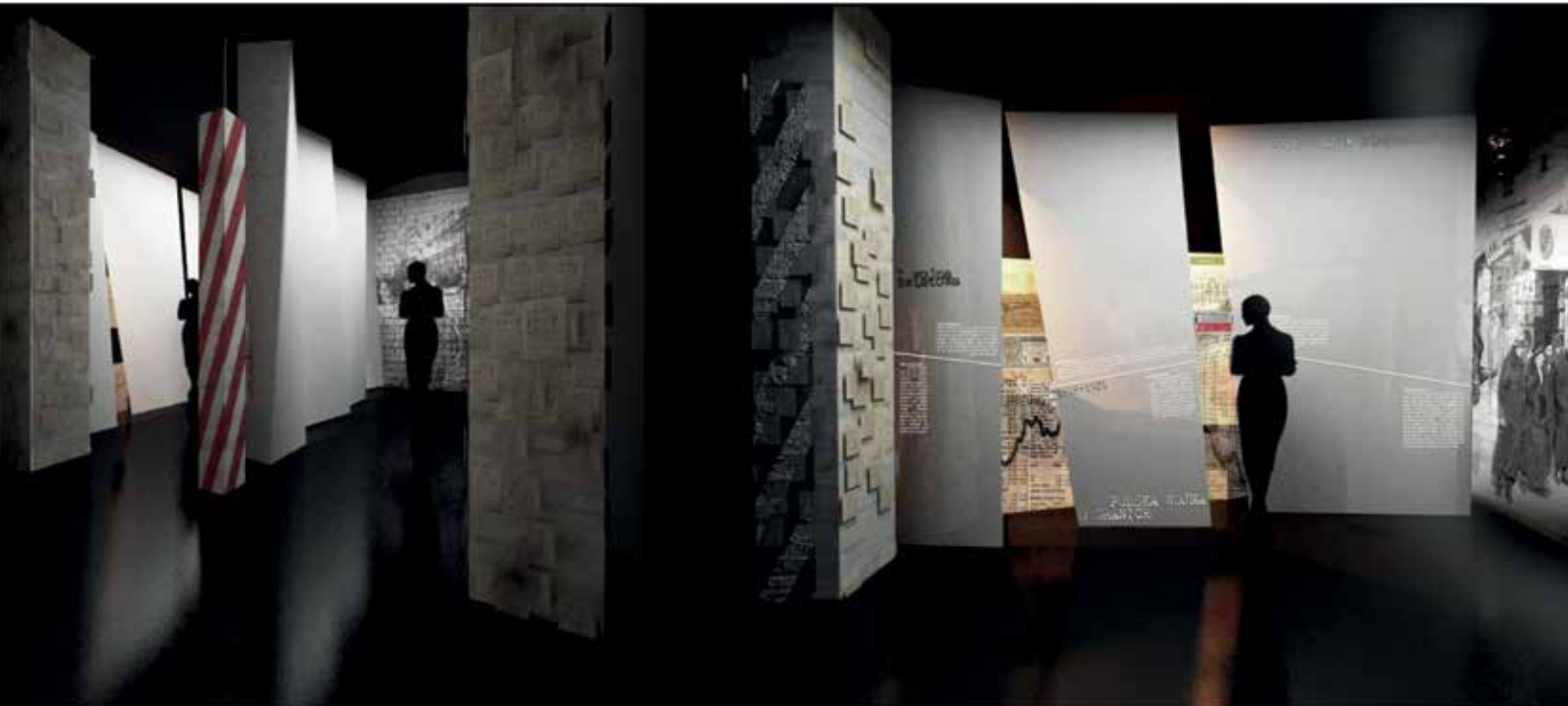
*Six-year olds from the Municipal Preschool No. 146 in Łódź  
Photo NBP Regional Branch in Łódź*



*Secondary school youth from Łódź  
Photo NBP Regional Branch in Łódź*

# Money museums of the world

The National Bank of Slovakia – Museum of Coins and Medals  
pp. 24–26





# The National Bank of Slovakia – Museum of Coins and Medals

**The Museum of Coins and Medals in Kremnica is celebrating its 125th Anniversary this year. It is one of the oldest museums in Slovakia. It was founded in 1890 as a historical museum of Kremnica. The town has been a traditional mining, mintage and medal-making centre since the Middle Ages, which is why coins and medals have always made up the majority of the museum's collections. In 1976 the museum began to specialise in numismatics. Because of its profile it became a part of the National Bank of Slovakia (NBS) in 1994.**

The museum's collections comprise around 100,000 items – numismatic (coins, medals, banknotes, financial items), historical and art-historical. Around 5,550 of them are presented to the public in the museum exhibitions.

The museum's exhibitions occupy 2,577 m<sup>2</sup> in four museum exhibition buildings. Depository space takes 372 m<sup>2</sup>.

The main exhibition called *Two Faces of Money – Money and Medal-Making in the History*

*of Slovakia* is the one and only exhibition specialized in numismatics and medal making in Slovakia. The exhibition, which covers five floors of a Gothic burger house on the historical town square, presents the history and evolution of means of payment in Slovakia from ancient times down to present-day coins and banknotes, as well as the history of medal making, including several unique exhibits. An important part of the exhibition is dedicated to the history of the old mining and minting town of Kremnica with its well-known Mint, which has been in operation for nearly 690 years.

The exhibition is divided into four thematic areas. During the introduction visitors meet the history of the town of Kremnica, which is closely connected with the history of money in Slovakia. The two underground floors of the exhibition focus on the history of mining and metallurgy. The authentic atmosphere of mining has been recreated by different kinds of mining galleries and equipment installed in the basement. Visitors can choose to join a guided tour through the exhibition or stroll around the museum on their own with an audio-guide available in 7 language versions.

The largest part of the exhibition is dedicated to the history of money in Slovakia. Visitors learn about the different kinds of means of payment and the various currencies used



*The history of mining and metallurgy in Slovakia is presented in the basement of the museum Collection of the NBS Museum of Coins and Medals*

in the country's past – from the objects and materials adopted as means of payment before coinage, the coins of the Celtic and Roman settlements, the means of payment from the Great Moravian period, the coins of the Hungarian kingdom, including the first coins minted in Kremnica, through the evolution of paper money, up to today's euro banknotes and coins. The exhibition shows valuable findings of coins, minting tools and devices, but also engravings, historical documents, paintings and all kinds of objects more or less closely related to coins – wallets, purses, money-boxes, jewellery made of coins, etc.

The history of medal art in Slovakia, seen as an important source of information on remarkable events or outstanding figures in our history, is presented in the loft of the building. There are medals made in the Kremnica Mint or by authors originating from Slovakia from the renaissance era to the present.

The exhibition was opened to the public in 2003, after the complete reconstruction of the historical building. This exhibition won the NBS Museum of Coins and Medals the "Museum of the Year 2003" prize, awarded by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, the Union of Museums in Slovakia and the Council of Art Galleries in Slovakia.

The second museum exhibition presents the Town Castle of Kremnica. The castle consists of a medieval building-complex from the 14th–15th century. The dominant feature of the castle area is the Church of St. Catherine. Besides that the museum offers other history and art-history exhibitions in the castle complex. The Town Castle was opened to the public in 1996 after the extensive archaeological research and restoration of the castle area. In the same year, the NBS Museum of Coins and Medals was awarded the Annual Prize of the cultural magazine Monuments and Museums, issued by the Slovak National Museum.



*The exhibition entitled "Archaeological research in the Town Castle" was prepared for the European Night of Museums in Kremnica*

*Collection of the NBS Museum of Coins and Medals*

Thematic long-term exhibitions highlighting special items in the various museum collections are presented in a historical burgher house on the town square. The current exhibition entitled "The Charm of Stoneware Gardens" presents the history of the Kremnica Stoneware Factory, which operated for approximately one and a half centuries (1815–1956). Characterised by high quality and originality, the factory's outstanding products were exported all over the world. The exhibition includes more than 800 pieces made by the factory. They come mostly from the collection of the NBS Museum of Coins and Medals, as well as from private collections and other museums.

The museum's gallery is used for occasional temporary exhibitions. The exhibition plan includes exhibitions on numismatic themes as well as contemporary art exhibitions.

An interesting attraction for visitors is the so-called "green room", with its wall paintings from the 16th century.

The museum offers a variety of educational programmes and creative activities for school groups and other types of visitors (e.g. seniors), which are based on cooperative learning and completion of practical tasks. Visitors coming across authentic historical objects acquire valuable experience, which is amplified by the interactive character of the individual programmes that require visitors' active participation and cooperation. The themes of the programmes are related to specific exhibitions, e. g. in the numismatic exhibition we offer programmes focused on the history of money (*Create your own money, The Reign of the Anjou kings of Hungary and their economic reforms, Money and Business*, etc.).



*The exhibition of coins and banknotes from the territory of Slovakia  
Collection of the NBS Museum of Coins and Medals*

The museum prepares all kinds of cultural events for the public. Visitors can discover the hidden treasures of the museum collections during special tours like the Night of

Museums or the Summer Night of Muses, whose programmes are enriched by theatre or music performances. In the Church of St. Catherine concerts are organized to mark



*Visitors to the museum can strike a souvenir coin themselves  
Collection of the NBS Museum of Coins and Medals*

various occasions (e. g. Christmas concerts, museum anniversaries, organ festivals).

The International Symposium of Medals is a special art symposium held in Kremnica every two years since 1988. The main idea of the symposium is to create favourable conditions for the creative work of the participating authors, and to contribute to the exchange of information and creative stimuli on the international level. The event is an opportunity for medal artists from different countries to learn about the latest trends in the development of medal art. Thanks to the International Symposium of Medals the museum has enriched its collections of struck and cast medals with many pieces made by excellent medal artists from all over the world. The medal collection of the symposia is expertly curated and made accessible for professionals and the general public.

In cooperation with other European and world central banks, we have organised numismatic-historical exhibitions and presentations in many countries. The most important were in Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, the USA and Mexico. Besides these activities our curators are active in publishing, and participate in numismatic-historical conferences and other similar events.

In 2014 the various exhibitions and events at the NBS Museum of Coins and Medals in Kremnica attracted more than 41,000 visitors, both from Slovakia and abroad.

■ Erika Grniaková  
*Communications Department of the Museum  
of Coins and Medals in Kremnica*

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Module „Meeting with money”

NBP Money Centre in memory of Sławomir S. Skrzypek