

All Polish collector coins feature:

- face value
- image of the Eagle established as the state emblem of the Republic of Poland
- inscription: Rzeczpospolita Polska
- year of issue



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.

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

Should you have any questions, please contact our consultants at the following phone number: +48 22 185 17 05.

Collector coins issued by NBP are sold at NBP regional branches and in the NBP online shop.

On 14 September 2023, Narodowy Bank Polski will be putting into circulation a silver coin “30th Anniversary of the Withdrawal of the Soviet Army from Poland” with a face value of 10 złoty.

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Narodowy Bank Polski

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NARODOWY
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Soviet Aggression against Poland – 17 September 1939



Collector coins

Soviet Aggression against Poland – 17 September 1939

On 5 September 2023, Narodowy Bank Polski is putting into circulation a silver coin “Soviet Aggression against Poland – 17 September 1939”, with a face value of 20 zloty.

In its plan of war against Germany, the Command of the Polish Armed Forces assumed the neutrality of the USSR, thus only token forces were left near the Polish-Soviet border. Therefore, the unprovoked Soviet aggression did not meet organized resistance. Nevertheless, the troops of the Border Protection Corps (BPC) took up the fight. The heroic resistance of the few border outposts delayed the actions of the aggressor.

The defence of Grodno went down in the annals of Polish military history, as did cavalry engagements near Skidel and Kodziewce, where the positions were gallantly defended by the 101st Uhlan Regiment under Major Stanisław Żukowski. For two weeks the Commander of the Border Protection Corps, General Wilhelm Orlik-Rückemann, led the BPC battle group in hard-fought battles and skirmishes against the Soviets near Sarny, at Ratno, Szack and Wytoczne. In turn, the 3rd Infantry Regiment of the BPC under Colonel Zdzisław Zajączkowski went into battle at Borowicze, Nawóz and Janówka in the Polesie region. The Nowogródek Cavalry Brigade fought near Wola Sudkowska and Władypole. Also troops commanded by General Franciszek Kleeberg won victories at Jabłoń and Milanów.

In north-eastern regions, General Józef Olszyna-Wilczyński tried to mount organized resistance against the Red Army. The situation was exacerbated by sabotage groups formed by national minorities, which attacked units of the Polish Army and killed isolated soldiers or small groups of soldiers as well as members of state administration and their families.

The defence of the Polish state against this incursion involved not only the Polish army but also civilians, in particular scouts and students. Their participation was a testimony to the imperative of defence of the Polish character of Eastern Borderlands.

The Soviet aggression was a mortal blow to the Polish Army already engaged in a bloody struggle against the Germans. It ruled out the possibility of continued resistance on the so-called Romanian bridgehead. On 17 September at 10 pm, following several hours of hostilities on the Polish-Soviet border, the Polish commander-in-chief, Marshal Edward Rydz-Śmigły issued a directive opening with the



Face value: 20 zł

Metal: Ag 925/1000

Finish: standard, oxidized

Diameter: 38.61 mm

Weight: 28.28 g

Edge (side): inscription

“Sowiecka agresja na Polskę – 17 IX 1939 r.”

[Soviet Aggression

against Poland – 17 September 1939]

Mintage: up to 12,000 pcs



Designer: Robert Kotowicz on the basis of the medal designed by Józef Gosławski

Issuer: NBP

The coins, commissioned by NBP, were struck by Mennica Polska SA

words: “The Soviets have entered. I order a general withdrawal to Romania and Hungary by the shortest routes. Do not fight the Bolsheviks, except in case of an attack from their side or an attempt to disarm the troops.” The decision was motivated by the intention to prevent fighting with no hope of victory. The main goal was to preserve own forces in order to continue the war at the side of the French and British allies.

The repression of the Polish nation which started with the Soviet aggression on 17 September 1939 continued until 1989.

Prof. Wiesław Wysocki

The “Year 1939” medal, which is the source of images for the coin design, was authored by a renowned sculptor Józef Gosławski (1908–1963). The scene on the obverse is a symbolic representation of the events of 17 September 1939 – a Polish soldier fighting the German aggressor is stabbed in the back by

a Red Army soldier. The inscription on the obverse says: “WE WRZEŚNIU 1939 NAPADNIĘCI PRZEZ ARMIE NIEMIECKĄ I BOLSZEWICKĄ – MY POLACY – OFIARĄ KRWI BRONILIŚMY WOLNOŚCI LUDÓW, HONORU I RELIGII [IN SEPTEMBER 1939, ATTACKED BY THE GERMAN AND THE BOLSHEVIK ARMIES, WE THE POLES, PAID IN BLOOD TO DEFEND THE FREEDOM OF PEOPLES, HONOUR AND RELIGION]”. The design came from a deep urge to comment on the tragic historical moment on part of the artist who witnessed those events.

The sculptor could not exhibit his work in his lifetime, he thus put together both sides of the medal, encased them in plaster and stored them in this form. It was not until 2009 that his family decided to make the work public.

Maria Anna Rudzka, PhD