

NBP

National Bank of Poland  
holds the exclusive right to issue currency in 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.**

Information on the issue schedule and the possibility of acquiring 2 zł coins can be found at the [www.nbp.pl/money](http://www.nbp.pl/money).

**On 19 October 2010**, the National Bank of Poland is putting into circulation collector coins of the „Towns in Poland” series depicting Gorlice, of 2-zloty denomination, struck in standard finish in Nordic Gold.



face value 2 zł • metal **CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy** • finish **standard**  
diameter 27.0 mm • weight 8.15 g • mintage (volume) 1,000,000 pcs

**Obverse:** An image of the Eagle established as the state emblem of the Republic of Poland. On the sides of the Eagle, the notation of the year of issue: 20-10. Below the Eagle, an inscription: ZŁ 2 ZŁ. In the rim, an inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA (Republic of Poland), preceded and followed by six pearls. The mint's mark: M/W, under the Eagle's left leg.

**Reverse:** Against a stylised outline of Gorlice and the Basilica of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary on the left-hand side, an image of an oil well. To the right of the oil well, a stylised image of the first in history kerosene street lamp in Gorlice. At the top, a semicircular inscription: GORLICE.

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

Obverse designer: **Ewa Tyc-Karpińska** Reverse designer: **Roussanka Nowakowska**

The coins were struck at the Mint of Poland in Warsaw.

# Towns in Poland

**In 2009 the NBP launched a series of coins "Towns in Poland". The coin depicting Gorlice is the seventh theme of the series.**



**GORLICE**  
19 October 2010

# Gorlice

# Gorlice



Gorlice is a town surrounded by the lavish greenery of the Beskid Niski (Low Beskid) mountain range in the Lesser Poland province at the Polish-Slovak border. As the region's capital, it combines the functions of the tourist and economic centre of the region. In over six hundred years of its history, Gorlice has experienced the ups and downs of fortune – the town was ravished by wars and fires, but also enjoyed fast economic growth, mostly thanks to the discovery of oil deposits. The town was founded around 1355 by Derslaw I Karwacjan. Thanks to its location on the trade route to Hungary and the right to hold weekly markets as well as a big fair twice a year, Gorlice became a vibrant crafts and trade centre.

From its establishment until mid-19th century, the area of Gorlice and four surrounding villages was called “Dominium Gorlice” – the State of Gorlice.

The 17<sup>th</sup> century abounded in events of vital importance. In 1617 the town, a strong Reformation centre, saw a famous dispute between the Arians and the Calvinists. On 2 May 1657, during the Swedish invasion of Poland, the town was burnt to the ground by the joint Swedish and Transylvanian forces. A chapel at Kręta street, funded by a city dweller in token of gratitude for miraculous salvation from the fire of 1657, was erected to commemorate the events.

In the year 1915 the town bore the impact of one of the biggest military operations of the World War I on the eastern front. The battle of Gorlice fought on 2 May 1915, took the lives of over 20,000 soldiers. More than 90 percent of the town's buildings were reduced to ruin and the population of Gorlice was decimated. Military cemeteries across the Beskid Niski area – six of which are located in Gorlice – stand a silent witness to the tragic events.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries the town and the whole region enjoyed economic prosperity thanks to the discovery of rich deposits of oil, which was meaningfully dubbed “the light from within the Earth” or “the black gold”. As the demand for oil was growing over the years, the first primitive oil wells – some of them hand-dug – and oil shafts appeared. As early as in 1852, in Siary near Gorlice, in the so-called Pusty Las, Duke Stanislaw Jablonowski opened the first in Podkarpacie (Sub-Carpathia) region industrially viable oil mine.

The discovery of the oil deposits attracted Ignacy Łukasiewicz (1822-1882) – an apothecary, inventor and oil entrepreneur considered

the father of the Polish oil industry – to Gorlice. While in Lviv, Łukasiewicz, in cooperation with Jan Zeh, as a result of research on crude oil distilled clear kerosene from seep oil. It was at the crossroads in Gorlice's borough of Zawodzie that for the first time in history a kerosene street lamp was lit in 1854. The place is currently marked by a chapel with a sculpture of the sorrowful Christ. Many memorabilia remind of Łukasiewicz's four-year stay in Gorlice – especially those collected in the premises of the town hall, which once housed the pharmacy rented by Łukasiewicz, or in the PTTK (Polish Tourist and Sightseeing Society) Regional Museum on Wąska street.

Oil industry developing in Gorlice attracted also foreign investors, among them William Henry Mac Garvey – a Canadian entrepreneur and inventor, who constructed a petroleum refinery in Glinik Mariampolski (Gorlice district) in 1883, and – in cooperation with an Austrian banker Johan Bergheim – opened a garage, which later developed into the “Glinik” Machine Factory. Both these plants have influenced the development of Gorlice for the next 120 years, giving work to Gorlice citizens and changing the face of the town.

Polish oil industrialists also greatly contributed to the development of the region. To mention just a few people well known from the Polish political arena of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries: Wojciech Biechoński – minister in the Polish National Government of 1863, later a mayor of Gorlice, Aleksander Skrzyński – Foreign Affairs Minister and Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland in 1925-1926, Władysław Długosz – minister for Galicia in the Vienna Government, explorer of oil deposits in Borysław. They grew to love the land of Gorlice and the „black gold” it offered to them. Today the citizens of Gorlice pay tribute to those men and the Gorlice oil basin, a token of which is the creation of Carpathian-Galician Petroleum Route, which covers, among others, the Museum of Oil Industry on Lipowa Street in Gorlice and the 30-year old Museum of Oil Industry and Ethnography in Libusza near Gorlice. All these efforts are aimed at preserving the memory of the treasure of Gorlice soil, so that the future generations know why Gorlice landscape features oil derricks, tripod masts and oil pump jacks.

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