



# THE PREPARATION OF SLOVAKIA FOR INTRODUCTION OF THE EURO

## PUBLIC INQUIRY ON THE ARTISTIC DESIGNS FOR THE SLOVAK SIDES OF THE EURO COINS

*The governor of the National Bank of Slovakia Ivan Šramko ceremonially declared the public inquiry on the artistic designs for the Slovak sides of the euro coins, at a press conference on 11th November 2005, in the presence of the deputy prime minister, minister of finance and national coordinator of the introduction of the euro in Slovakia Ivan Mikloš.*

When it entered the European Union on 1st May 2004, the Slovak Republic committed itself to enter the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and introduce the euro common currency. Although the euro should come into use in Slovakia only from 1st January 2009, the National Bank of Slovakia already began to prepare for the transition to the common currency in 2004.

The preparations also included the declaration of an anonymous public competition to find artistic designs for the Slovak sides of the euro coins, with the aim of obtaining the greatest number of high quality artistic designs presenting the rich history and exceptional cultural and natural treasures of Slovakia, which will be recognizable not only for the inhabitants of Slovakia, but also for the people of other countries of the European Union.

The competition declared by the National Bank of Slovakia in July 2004, was held in two rounds. In the first round with a closing date of 31st January 2005, drawn coin designs were evaluated, while in the second round with a closing date of 30th September 2005, plaster models were made according to the best drawn designs.

Sixty four designs were entered for the first round of the competition, with drawings for each of the eight Slovak sides of the euro coins. A total of 658 drawings of individual denominations, including variant designs were judged.

Apart from representatives of the National Bank of Slovakia, experts from various scientific and cultural institutions of the Slovak Republic and representatives of ar-



tists, participated in the two expert commissions, which evaluated the designs. On the basis of their recommendations, the Bank Board of the National Bank of Slovakia selected 36 designs for individual coins for

participation in the second round of the competition. In May 2005, their artists were asked to produce plaster models. On the basis of recommendations from the expert commissions, the Bank Board of the National Bank of Slovakia again selected 10 designs, which were presented to the public in a public inquiry with the possibility to vote during the period 12th to 20th November 2005.

The decision about the future form of the Slovak sides of the euro coins is the responsibility of the Bank Board of the National Bank of Slovakia, but before its decision, it wants to know the view of the Slovak public, since it is a theme concerning every Slovak citizen. Apart from obtaining the views of the public on the submitted designs, the inquiry has the aim of strengthening awareness of the euro and its planned introduction in 2009.

**Photos: Ivan Paška and Archive of the NBS**

**THE ARTISTIC DESIGNS FOR THE SLOVAK SIDES OF THE EURO COINS**



**Cross with two pairs of arms on three hills.** This is the heraldic symbol on the state shield, one of the state symbols of the Slovak Republic. The cross is placed in a circular field, with the background formed by stylized rocks, which express the permanence and strength of the state.

**The Celtic Biatec coin.** The design is a depiction of a tetradrachma of the Bratislava type from the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC with a galloping horseman bearing a branch. Coins of this type represent the peak of Celtic coin production, and are the earliest evidence of the use of Latin writing in our territory. On the coin is the inscription „Biatec“, which occurs most frequently on the Bratislava coins and from which their name is derived.



**Cross from Veľká Mača.** The cast bronze cross from the period of Great Moravia with a depiction of the Holy Trinity comes from an archaeological site at Veľká Mača. The design is a symbol of the historic roots of Christianity in the territory of Slovakia and the continuity of the Great Moravian tradition in the historical consciousness of the Slovak nation. The outline of the cross with two pairs of arms and the letter „E“ as the symbol of Europe complete the composition.

**Bratislava Castle.** It is the characteristic dominant feature of the capital city of the Slovak Republic. It is a national cultural monument, one of the best known symbols of Bratislava and its most visited monument. The state shield, one of the official state symbols of the Slovak Republic, is added to the design of the castle.



**The Maiden's Tower of Devín Castle.** This castle on a rock above the confluence of the rivers Morava and Danube is a symbol of the Slavonic past and Slavonic mutuality. It was the most important frontier castle in the Great Moravian period. The Renaissance Maiden's Tower of the castle is depicted in the design.

**Spišský hrad (Spiš Castle).** It is a dominant feature of Spiš, a territory extraordinarily rich in outstanding art-historical monuments. It is one of the greatest medieval castle complexes in Slovakia and in the whole of Europe. It is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, together with the neighbouring cultural monuments.



**Kriváň.** The Tatran peak of Kriváň is connected with important events. As the aim of national hikes by the followers of Štúr, it played an important part in the struggle for national consciousness. Struggles for freedom occurred in its surroundings during the Slovak National Uprising. Therefore, it became a symbol of the protection of the identity of the Slovak nation and its historic territory.

**The Madonna and Child from Kremnica.** The wooden statue of the Madonna with the Christ child standing on a crescent moon dates from the period around 1500. This valuable Late Gothic work comes from Kremnica. The Madonna with child is not only a symbol of Christianity, but also of protection and motherhood.



**The Madonna and Child from Levoča.** It is a work of the most important representative of Late Gothic sculpture in Slovakia, Master Paul. The sculpture is part of the high altar of the parish church of St. James at Levoča, which is the highest original Gothic winged altar in Europe.

**Sts. Cyril and Methodius.** St. Constantine – Cyril (827-869) and St. Methodius (814-885), the first teachers of Christianity to the Slavs and the founders of Slavonic writing, came to Great Moravia in 863. They founded a seminary for training priests, which became a centre of culture, education and literature. In 868, they got the Slavonic liturgy approved by Pope Hadrian II and the Old Slavonic language was placed on the level of the other existing cultural languages – Latin, Greek and Hebrew.

