

The Diocese of Košice was established in 1804 and St Elisabeth's Cathedral was consecrated as the main diocesan church. Opposite to it was built the classicist Bishop's Palace. Košice's economic progress was boosted by the completion of rail connections with Budapest (1860) and Bohumín (1870). The landmark Reduta and theatre buildings were constructed at the end of the 19th century, as were the Moorish-style Jewish synagogue and Jakab's Palace, which combines art nouveau and romantic styles.

In the 20th century Košice once again became a significant administrative centre. In September 2008 the Council of the European Union formally designated Košice as one of two 2013 European Capitals of Culture.

Bishop's Palace



Jakab's Palace



Synagogue



Coin details

Denomination: €20

Material: Ag 925/1000

Cu 75/1000

Weight: 33.63 g

Diameter: 40 mm

Raised edge inscription:

EURÓPSKE HLAVNÉ MESTO KULTÚRY 2013,

(European Capital of Culture 2013), preceded by a dividing

mark in the form of a stylised key

Mintage: limited to a maximum of 15,000 coins

Designer: Karol Ličko

Engraver: Dalibor Schmidt

Producer: Mincovňa Kremnica / Kremnica Mint

The obverse side of the coin shows a 1617 townscape of Košice along with the city's historic coat of arms. The coat of arms of the Slovak Republic appears in the lower part of the design with the year „2013“ to its right. The country name „SLOVENSKO“ is in the upper part. The stylised initials of the designer, Karol Ličko, are placed next to the left edge, while the mintmark of the Kremnica Mint lies to the right of the Košice coat of arms.

The reverse side depicts some of the architectural landmarks of Košice's historical preservation area, including St Elisabeth's Cathedral and St Michael's Chapel. Situated on the left of the design is a statue of St Elizabeth of Hungary, the town's patron saint, from the altarpiece of the cathedral's main altar, shown together with a Gothic arch and stylised lettering. Along the edge of the design, from left to right, is the inscription „PAMIATKOVÁ REZERVÁCIA KOŠICE“ (Historical preservation area of Košice). The denomination „20 EURO“ appears in the upper part.



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Cover photo: St Elisabeth's Cathedral



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Historical Preservation Area of
KOŠICE
Silver Collector Coin

Košice grew up as a Slavic market settlement at the crossing of ancient trade routes in the Hornád river valley. Given its strategic location, Košice was destined to play a significant role in history. In 1983 an extensive part of Košice was declared to be a historical preservation area, encompassing many outstanding works of architecture and reflecting both the city's rich history and its special position in the country.

■ Košice has a history going back much further than the date of its first written mention, 1230, when it was referred to as the royal settlement of Villa Cassa. Košice itself was granted town privileges in 1290, thanks in part to King Béla IV of Hungary, who invited Saxon Germans to settle in the kingdom after 1241, offering them various privileges as part of a policy to inhabit the country in the wake of Mongol incursions. By 1290 the town was already surrounded by stone fortifications. The town saw an upsurge in trade from the end of the 13th century and fairs started to be held there.

■ When Charles Robert of Anjou was contesting the Hungarian throne, Košice gave him military support. After his victory, in appreciation of the local assistance, he rewarded the town with privileges that accelerated its economic growth. Košice was granted its most important privilege – the status of a free royal town – in 1342. It was at that time the second-highest ranking town in the Hungarian Kingdom, and this fact is reflected in the imposing



St Elisabeth's Cathedral

Gothic architecture that dominates the town square. Around 1380 work began on Košice's major landmark, the Gothic St Elisabeth's Cathedral in the town square. One of the most interesting elements of its interior is the 15th century winged altarpiece of the main altar. With 48 neo-Gothic panel paintings, this altarpiece is one of the largest of its kind in Europe. Next to the cathedral is a separate bell tower (Urban's Tower) and the Gothic St Michael's charnel house. The presence of Dominican and Franciscan orders in the town dates back even further, and they built churches and monasteries. The oldest sacral building in the city is the Dominican Church.



■ Košice played the leading role in the Pentapolitana, a league of the five most important towns in the present day Eastern Slovakia. In 1369 it became the first town in Europe to receive a coat of arms (from Louis I of Hungary). This period is recalled by the 15th century Levoča House.

■ After the Battle of Mohács (1526), Košice became the centre of the anti-Turkish defence of the Potis region. The state of war adversely affected trade and the town reached the nadir of its decline in 1556, when it suffered a devastating fire. With court support, the town was rebuilt in the Renaissance style. Later, in the 16th and 17th centuries, modernisation of the fortifications turned the town into an almost impregnable fortress. Košice was the seat of the Archbishop of Eger, as well as the state and military administrations and the Spiš Chamber. The town suffered during the period of anti-Hapsburg uprisings, when it had to deal with numerous fires, military commitments, and a recession. A Jesuit University was established in the town in 1657, and the Jesuit University Church was built later on.

■ The period from the Szatmar Peace (1711) to the revolutionary year of 1848 was a time of peace and growth for Košice. The aristocracy and burghers erected new palaces and there were new public buildings in the baroque and classicist styles. One example is the former Town Hall, built in the second half of the 18th century, and others include the former County House (1779) and, from the 19th century, the Csáky-Dessewffy Palace and Forgách Palace.

Coat of arms of Košice

Cassovia – capital of Upper Hungary (1617)

St Elisabeth's Cathedral

Statue of St Elisabeth

Forgács' Palace

Jesuit Church

Historic Town Hall

