The turn of the millennia has a magic charm of unrepeatability. For the present generation it is an opportunity for thinking about the past, for recalling important events in the histories of states, nations and all humanity, and considering the meaning of the existence of the human community and the individual person. The coming of the new millennium is connected with the idea of rapid progress in all areas of human knowledge. The Earth still hides a multitude of mysteries, awaiting exploration. Beyond its limits, space is opening up, and man is discovering ever more distant spaces and seeking answers to the existence of life and extra-terrestrial civilizations. Progress in science and technology give him hope of using other planets and the possibility of permanently leaving his terrestrial cradle. Modern technologies and materials, the development of computers, their miniaturization and the genetic revolution are opening up new possibilities in medicine. Humanity will ever more successfully struggle with death and disease and will reach ever greater ages. Man is gaining the power to influence his own development and the development of the rest of the biosphere. While his knowledge drives him to further research, it seems that his morality lags behind. Whether mankind uses his new knowledge and opportunities to improve the quality of life and in the interest of the common good will be influenced by the level of his morality and ability to realize his responsibility for the life of the present and future generations. When we look at the world on the threshold of the third millennium, with millions of people living in poverty, with ethnic, religious and other conflicts growing into violence, armed conflicts and wars, we can still hope that in the new millennium, humanity will be more oriented towards basic spiritual values, that the problem of poverty will be more radically solved, that there will be more cooperation, tolerance of difference views and movement towards agreement and compromise.

To commemorate this important milestone in time, as the coming of the third millennium undoubtedly is, the National Bank of Slovakia has added a commemorative to its planned issues for 2001. In relation to the theme of the third millennium, it was originally planned that the
The process of working out the exact technical design and parameters of the coin led to a completely new and innovative design. The result is a coin which expresses the theme of the beginning of the third millennium not only in artistic design, but also in shape – a triangle – and in the use of three metals. The uniqueness of the design lies in the fact that the basically silver coin blank with the shape of an equilateral triangle with rounded corners has a gold blank inserted in one side. A platinum blank is inserted in the centre of the gold blank, and the blanks are locked together during striking. The inventive new design of the coin, its unusual shape and the combination of three precious metals emphasizes the extraordinary character of the beginning of the third millennium and symbolizes the coming of a new modern era.

All three metals have a fineness of 999/1000. Their weights are bound to the troy ounce and its fractions. The silver plate has a weight of 31.10 g (1 oz), the gold plate: 6.22 g (1/5 oz) and the platinum plate: 0.31 g (1/100 oz). The gold plate has a diameter of 24 mm, the platinum plate has a diameter of 5 mm, and their thickness is 0.75 mm. The whole coin has a weight of 37.63 g, fits into a circle with a diameter of 50 mm, each corner is 43.5 mm from the centre of the opposite side, and its thickness is 3.2 mm. The edge of the coin is smooth. Like all the previous coins of the Slovak Republic, it was produced at the Kremnica Mint. It is struck in so-called proof finish, with a polished coin field and matt relief. A total of 8000 pieces have been struck. The engraving of the design was done by engraver Dalibor Schmidt. The National Bank of Slovakia issued the coin on 20 December 2000.

It is noteworthy that this is the first time in the long history of the Kremnica Mint that platinum has been used for striking coins. It is also the first time the mint has struck a triangular coin and the first coin composed of several coin blanks of precious metals, and moreover with one sided insertion of two smaller blanks into the basic blank. According to our information, this coin is also of unique design from the world point of view. As a result the process of preparing the striking was extraordinarily demanding. It was necessary to develop technology for preparing the coin blanks, the method of locking them together, and the technology for preparing the auxiliary tools and dies of special shape. All this was substantially more demanding than the normal production of round coins. The actual process of preparing the striking was also very demanding. In the stage of test striking, it was necessary to react to previously unverified technical phenomena. Various corrections had to be made to the equipment for preparing the blanks and the dies. Preparation of the blanks was extraordinarily demanding, to ensure the perfect union on striking. The actual striking required demanding verification of the optimal pressure and the number of strokes of the striking press. After enormous effort by all involved, the coins were successfully produced and the high technical level of the mint and level of qualification of its workers were demonstrated.

An anonymous public competition was held for the design of the commemorative coin. Eleven artists participated, each submitting one design. The expert commission recommended the design by Mgr. art. Patrik Kovačovský, one of the most successful designers of Slovak commemorative coins, who won the first prize in the competition. When judging the competition the commission emphasized the balanced intellectual and artistic level of the winning design, characterized by economy of artistic stylization, appropriate choice of symbols and the level of the contemporary artistic language expressing the given theme. The artist made some adjustments to his design on the basis of the recommendations of the commission. He changed the positions of the letters alpha and omega on the reverse of the coin and replaced a relief circle with a line. On the obverse, the main motif is a depiction of space, using the contrast of the three metals of different colours – silver, gold and platinum. In the centre, the Sun is depicted on the gold plate, with an eye, formed by incised lines, placed on it as a divine symbol and a symbol of looking into the future. The iris of the eye is on the platinum plate, but partly extends onto the surrounding gold. The astrological symbols of the planets are placed at the junction of the metals. The composition includes the Earth and several other planets of the Solar System, indicating our place in space. The reverse of the coin bears a composition of three hands, inspired by the motif of the creation of Adam from the famous frescoes by Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel. The depiction of three hands directed towards each other is an expression of the need for cooperation and solidarity between people. This is emphasized by the letters alpha and omega placed between them.

A second prize was not awarded in the competition. Two third prizes went to the Kremnica artists Štefan Novotný and the academic sculptor Jozef Karol Höger. The former proposed the theme of important events and discoveries in human history for the obverse, with space travel and exploration for the reverse. The latter placed Leonardo’s famous symbol of man as the measure of all things and values on the obverse, with historic and modern figures performing typical activities on the reverse. The element of time is underlined by the use of the motif of instruments for measuring time from the past and present.