



Matthias II and his queen consort Anne, engraving

## Coin data

Denomination: SKK 5000  
 Material: Au 900, Ag 75, Cu 25  
 Weight: 9.5 g  
 Diameter: 26 mm  
 Edge: milled  
 Number of pieces minted: Limited max. 4,500 pcs.  
 in proof quality  
 Designer: Miroslav Ronai, Branislav Ronai  
 Engraver: Dalibor Schmidt  
 Producer: Kremnica Mint

The obverse of the coin shows a composition of the interior and tower of St. Martin's Coronation Cathedral and of Bratislava Castle with a part of its fortification. The name of the state, SLOVENSKÁ REPUBLIKA, appears in the inscription on both sides of the composition. The state coat of arms is placed in the middle of the bottom part of the coin, and the year 2008 appears on both sides of the coat of arms in a divided line. Stylized initials of the first names and surnames of the coin designers are located above the fortification near the edge of the coin – the initials of Miroslav Ronai, MR, are on the left, and those of Branislav Ronai, BR, on the right.

The reverse of the coin depicts a portrait of the King Matthias II along with the coronation insignia – the Hungarian royal crown and the coronation sword in the foreground. The right part depicts the tower of the St. Michael's Gate and the tower of the Franciscan Church in Bratislava. The texts KORUNOVÁCIA MATEJA II. (Coronation of Mathias II), BRATISLAVA, and 1608, the year of coronation, are placed along the right edge of the coin in three lines. The designation of the denomination of 5000 Sk is located near the bottom edge. The symbol of the Kremnica Mint, MK between two dies, is situated below the handle of a sword.



BRATISLAVA CORONATIONS  
 400<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE CORONATION OF  
**MATTHIAS II**  
 COMMEMORATIVE GOLD COIN

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 Photo: Marek Velčák

Further information on NBS commemorative coins can be found on  
[www.nbs.sk/Slovak Currency/Slovak Commemorative Coins](http://www.nbs.sk/Slovak Currency/Slovak Commemorative Coins)



In 1536, the Hungarian Diet decided that the capital and coronation town of Hungary would become Bratislava (at that time called Pressburg). Hence, Bratislava became the seat of the Hungarian Diet, the coronation town for Hungarian kings and the seat of the most important institutions of the country. The Gothic parish church of St. Martin, in which 11 Hungarian rulers were crowned between 1563 and 1830, became the coronation church.

The accession of Matthias II to the Hungarian throne happened under interesting circumstances, because he had to force his older brother, the emperor and King Rudolf, to renounce to his Hungarian throne.

Rudolf, an art collector and friend of alchemists, lived in Prague and was known for his aversion to rule. In 1593, he appointed Matthias governor of Upper and Lower Austria and, after the breakout of the 15-years War against the Turks, military commander in chief. Recatholization and raging of troops in Royal Hungary stirred up a revolt. The Transylvanian magnate Stephen Bocskay took advantage of this situation, allied himself with the Turks and invaded Moravia and Austria, thereby threatening the whole empire. The Emperor Rudolf remained inactive and a disaster was imminent in the country. Matthias II, as a military leader, made a truce with the Turks and terminated the first anti-Habsburg uprising of the Hungarian Estates, the so-called Stephen Bocskay uprising, by the Peace of Vienna



The Coronation of Matthias II, engraving

(1606). He was able to achieve this mainly thanks to the support of Protestant aristocracy, which, however, was not selfless, since Matthias had to promise extensive religious freedoms to Protestants. With the subsequent support of the Hungarian, Austrian, Moravian and Bohemian aristocracy, he forced the childless Rudolf to renounce to the Hungarian crown.

In September 1608, a coronation diet met in Bratislava. It took advantage of the weakened position of the future ruler and adopted by vote a new estate constitution. The Lutheran Stephen Illésházy was elected Palatine.

Matthias II was the third Hungarian king to be crowned in Bratislava. The coronation took place on 19 November 1608 in St. Martin's Catholic Church and Protestant magnates also participated in it. Matthias II was crowned by Peter Pázmány,

the Archbishop of Esztergom. However, as a Lutheran, the new Palatine was not allowed to touch the crown, although as the Palatine he was supposed to put it on the head of the ruler. Therefore, another Catholic clergyman replaced him during this act. Nevertheless, he was fulfilling all other obligations during the whole coronation, prescribed by the ceremonial. He was invited to the royal coronation banquet, which was prepared in the royal palace of Bratislava Castle.

The course of the coronation was the same as that of the coronation of his father Maximilian (1563) and brother Rudolf (1572). After the Mass, the King went on foot through the streets of the town to the Town Hall, then into the church next to the Franciscan Monastery, where he knighted the Knights of the Golden Spur. On a horse, he passed through St. Michael's Gate to the front of the town walls, where he swore the coronation oath, and then went on to the bank of the Danube, where he symbolically laid about with a sword towards the four cardinal points to show his resoluteness to fight for the Hungarian country against its enemies.

In 1611, Matthias II was also crowned Bohemian King and in 1612 also Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. The period of his rule was primarily characterized by intensive development of the Lutheran Church. However, the last years of his rule were marked by increasing gravity of religious disputes between the Catholics and Protestants, which finally ended in the biggest armed conflict of the 17th century – the Thirty-Years War. Because Matthias had no descendant, he designated Ferdinand of Styria as his successor. Ferdinand was crowned Hungarian king as early as during Matthias' life – on 1 July 1618. Matthias II died on 20 March 1619 in Vienna.

