

## Obverse

On the collector coin's obverse there is a depiction of Banič's parachute, based on the design that appears on the respective patent document. At the left of the design is the Slovak coat of arms. The year of issuance '2020' appears at the lower left edge and the name of the issuing country 'SLOVENSKO' along the lower right edge. Below the parachute design are the mint mark of the Kremnica Mint (Mincovňa Kremnica), consisting of the letters 'MK' placed between two dies, and the stylised letters 'PV' referring to the coin's designer Peter Valach.



Memorial to Štefan Banič at Bratislava's Milan Rastislav Štefánik Airport

## Reverse

The reverse shows a portrait of Štefan Banič. To the right of it are the coin's denomination '10' and currency 'EURO', one above the other. The name 'ŠTEFAN BANIČ' appears along the right edge of the design, while along the opposite edge are the years of the inventor's birth and death '1870' and '1941', separated by a dot.

## Coin details

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Denomination:   | €10  |
| Composition:    | .900 silver, .100 copper   |
| Weight:         | 18 g   |
| Diameter:       | 34 mm  |
| Edge lettering: | ŠTEFAN BANIČ -<br>VYNÁLEZCA PADÁKA<br>(Štefan Banič -<br>Parachute inventor)                 |
| Issuing volume: | limited to a maximum<br>of 11,000 coins in either brilliant<br>uncirculated or proof quality |
| Designer:       | Peter Valach   |
| Engraver:       | Dalibor Schmidt  |
| Producer:       | Kremnica Mint (Slovakia)   |



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Photographs: [www.magistra-historia.sk](http://www.magistra-historia.sk),  
[www.smolenice.com](http://www.smolenice.com), [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

[www.nbs.sk/sk/bankovky-a-mince/](http://www.nbs.sk/sk/bankovky-a-mince/)  
[eurove-mince/zberatelske](http://eurove-mince/zberatelske)

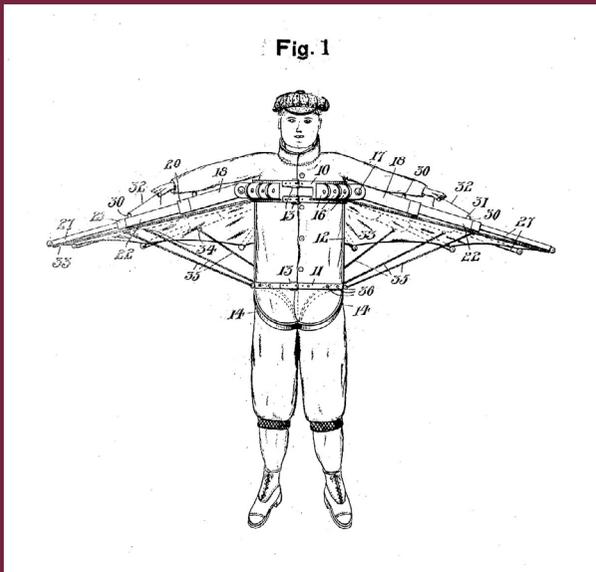


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150th anniversary of  
the birth of  
Štefan Banič

SILVER COLLECTOR EURO COIN

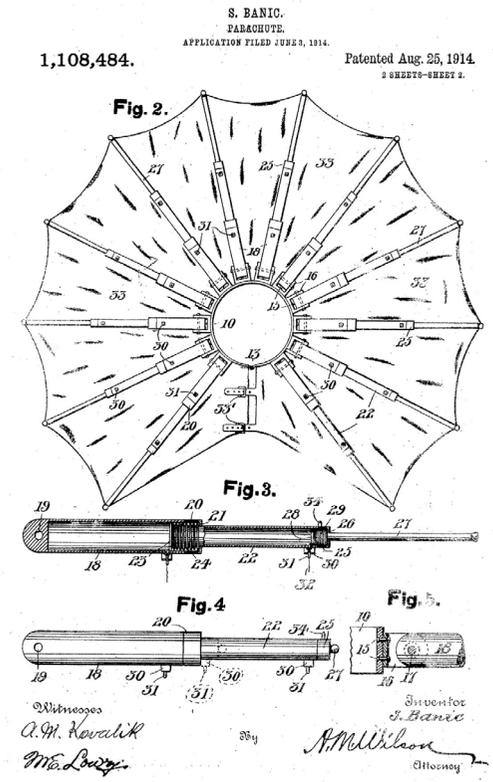


A figure from the parachute patent granted to Štefan Banič on 25 August 1914

Štefan Banič, the Slovak inventor of an early parachute design, was born on 23 November 1870 in the village of Neštich (present-day Smolenická Nová Ves). He trained as a bricklayer and in 1907, aged 37, he did what many of his compatriots were doing and emigrated to the United States. There he settled in Greenville, Pennsylvania, working first as a miner, then at a quarry, and then at an engineering works, where he began to express his innovative talent.

The early 20th century saw the emergence of powered air flight. In 1912 Banič witnessed a fatal plane crash, a not rare occurrence at a time when aviation technology was still in its infancy. Shaken by the experience, Banič began to explore ways of helping pilots escape from out-

the help of friends, Banič came up with a novel umbrella-like parachute design. The parachute opened using a multi-spring system and solved the problem of so-called swimming in the air. The parachute was attached to the wearer's body with breast straps. The wearer was fastened into the parachute; there was no hanging freely by cords in the way we are familiar with today. Before he could get his design patented, Banič had to show that it worked. On 3 June 1914, in front of representatives of the United States Patent Office in Washington DC, Banič demonstrated his invention by jumping from the roof of a building that, depending on the historical source, was between 15 and 41 storeys tall. He further demonstrated the parachute by making a 600-foot jump from a plane. On 25 August 1914, in the light of these jumps, the Patent Office granted Banič his patent, giving him the right to produce, use and sell his parachute in the United States. The main advantages of this parachute were its light weight and deployment speed. It brought Banič to the attention of the public, press and aviation experts. The US Army bought the patent, but never put this type of parachute into service. A few weeks after the outbreak of the First World War, Banič was made an honorary member of the US Army. It is claimed that Banič's parachute was used in the First World War by pilots of the La Fayette Escadrille, a French-commanded unit composed largely of American volunteer pilots, but that fact has not been credibly verified. This



A drawing of the parachute construction, 1914

does not, however, take away from Banič's pioneering technical achievement.

After fourteen years in the United States, and despite his success as an innovator, Banič returned to his home village of Smolenická Nová Ves, in what was now Czechoslovakia, where he took up employment as a quarry blasting engineer. He did not continue his inventing career, but rather devoted himself to fruit growing and to surveying local karst system. In 1929 he co-discovered Driny Cave. Štefan Banič died on 2 January 1941.