

Commemorative coin

EASTER JOY. THE PYSANKA

The Ukrainian pysanka is both a masterpiece of folk art and a unique cultural phenomenon, accumulating profound layers of figurative and symbolic meaning. The origins of egg painting date back to pre-Christian times, emerging alongside the first agricultural cultures on the territory of modern-day Ukraine. The archaic ornamentation – solar signs, the majestic image of the World Tree, and the sacred figure of the Mother Goddess – are eloquent testimony to the ancient roots of this tradition, serving as eternal metaphors for existence.

The tradition of egg painting evolved as an element of beliefs tied to the solar calendar cycle. In spring, during the vernal equinox, our ancestors celebrated the triumph of light over darkness by gifting one another an egg – the archetype of the cosmos and a symbol of the birth of new life. Pysankas served as wishes for health and beauty, as protective amulets against natural disasters, and even as a symbolic gesture of reconciliation.

With the advent of Christianity, these ancient customs did not fade into oblivion; instead, they were imbued with new meaning. The ancient name "Velykden" (literally "The Great Day"), which semantically signified the greatest day, harmonized perfectly with the essence of the primary Christian holiday – the Resurrection of Christ – and the egg became a symbol of the Risen Christ.

The heritage of the art of egg-painting spans all of Ukraine, yet every region has nurtured its own unique meta-language of colors and ornaments. This year's commemorative coin is dedicated to Polissia, one of Ukraine's most ancient historical and ethnographic regions.



Polissian egg painting was shaped by local cultural traditions and is distinguished by an ornamental system dominated by geometric motifs: rhombuses, triangles, squares, as well as circular, oval, and linear elements. Spirals are frequently depicted on Polissian pysankas as signs of the eternal motion of existence, while nets symbolize the connection between worlds. Comb-like protrusions (like the teeth of rakes) were also common, used in folk imagination to summon the nurturing rain necessary for a future harvest. Simultaneously, stars and the sun signify light, life-giving energy, and prosperity, while waves represent water.

Another widespread ornament on Polissian pysankas is the ruzha (an eight-pointed star) – one of the most ancient symbols, personifying the sun, fire, and light, which represent life, well-being, energy, and the awakening of spring.

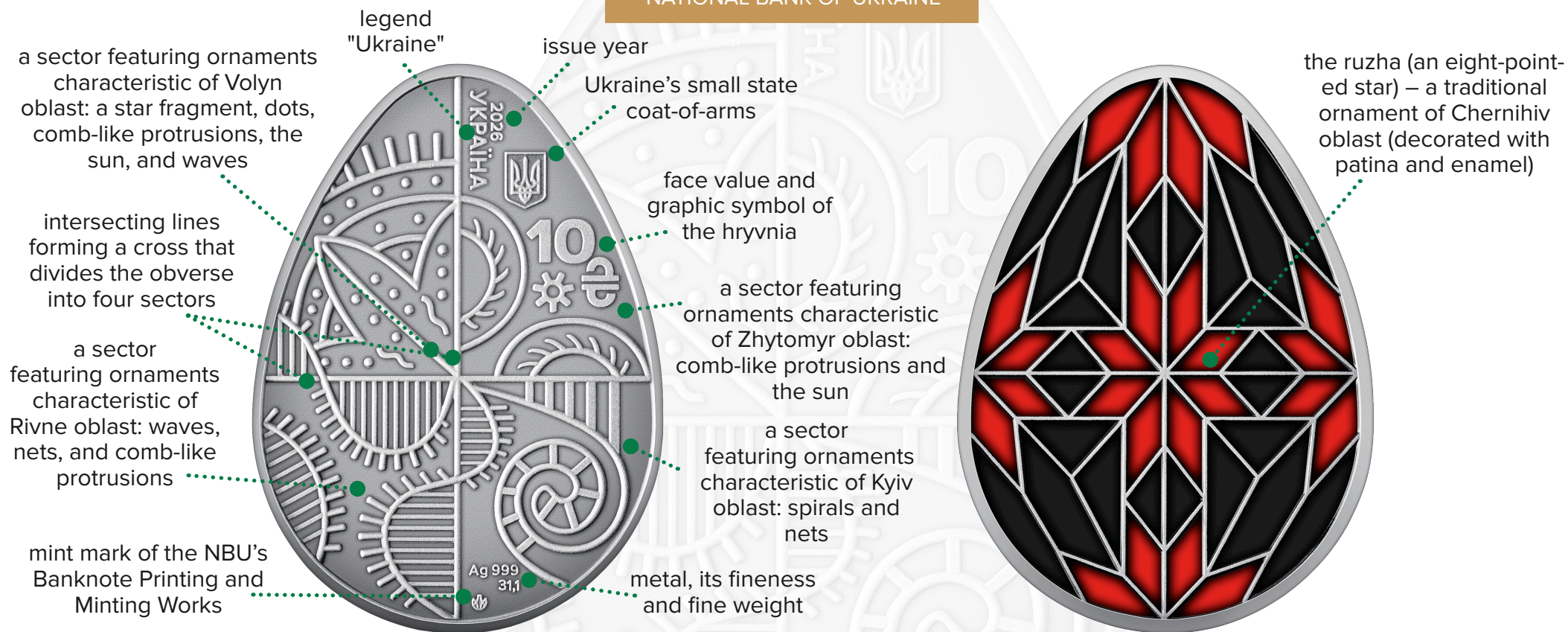
The traditional color palette of Polissian pysankas is notably restrained. In this palette, red reigns as a symbol of strength, health, and energy; black represents the earth, fertility, and ancestral memory; and yellow embodies sunlight, warmth, the energy of life, and the harvest.

The Polissian pysanka is a vital component of Ukraine's intangible cultural heritage. It stands as a testament to the continuity of folk traditions, the bond between humanity and nature, and the historical memory of the region – qualities that ensure its enduring relevance within the contemporary cultural landscape.

Designer – Oleksandra Kuchynska.

EASTER JOY. THE PYSANKA

NATIONAL BANK OF UKRAINE



Issue date

6 April 2026

Metal

silver

Diameter

ovoid-shaped

Quality

special uncirculated

Edge

grooved in sectors

Mintage

up to 15,000