

Kamnik revitalised through high levels of enterprise development

In cooperation with the KIKšstarter cooperative, Kamnik Tourism and Sports Agency, and the Kotlovnicca youth centre, and with the support of the European CINEMA project, the Municipality of Kamnik is engaging in a number of activities to rejuvenate the town centre and increase its attractiveness to local residents, businesses and, of course, tourists.

Its location and rich history make Kamnik one of the most beautiful and most intriguing towns in Slovenia. Quality of life in this small medieval town, which offers something for everyone of all ages, from toddlers to the elderly, is extremely high. Historically, Kamnik has been a major player in the fields of industry, small business and enterprise, with a large number of companies starting life in the town before becoming well-known beyond Slovenia's borders. Kamnik's past glories were provided by the likes of Kemijska Industrija Kamnik, Titan, Stol Kamnik and Svilanit, but it remains an economically robust town even today. It is, for example, home to a number of major food-producing companies, including Nektar Natura, Eta Kamnik, Meso Kamnik and Jata Emona.

Kamnik is keen to build its future on its rich historical tradition

With its partner organisations, the Municipality of Kamnik is actively investing time and money in a bid to revitalise the town centre. The site of the former gunpowder store is home to several smaller and slightly larger companies, including the KIKšstarter cooperative, which fosters enterprise growth and development, and the Kotlovnicca youth centre. The Barutana creative and cultural centre is also taking shape and will be completed in the near future. It aims to increase the variety of events in the town and surrounding area even further, and provide a home to youth, cultural and non-governmental organisations.

In addition to the regular larger-scale events for which Kamnik is already known, such as Kamfest, the Days of National Dress and Clothing Heritage, the Veronika Festival and the Kamnik Carnival, the 'Tisočletje dobrih kupčij' (A Thousand Years of Good Bargains) project brings together small events and activities with the aim of returning urban bustle to the streets of Kamnik all year round.

The ‘Tisočletje dobrih kupčij’ project and online platform yields further success

The ‘Tisočletje dobrih kupčij’ project, which is designed to revitalise the town centre, was established in 2020. It brings together businesses based in the centre, merchants, restaurateurs and cafe-owners, craftspeople and other service providers, local residents, the Municipality of Kamnik, the KIKšstarter cooperative and Kamnik Tourism and Sports Agency. Suggestions, criticisms and ideas for the rejuvenation of the town centre are collected and discussed at the project meetings, which take place several times a year.



Meeting of Kamnik town centre enterprises, May 2021 (Photo: KIKšstarter Cooperative)

An online platform has been designed to gather together the latest news. (www.trgovski-center-kamnik.si). It is aimed at those visiting the town for business or private reasons. The website publishes directories of restaurants and cafes, shops and other service activities, parks and children’s playgrounds, car parks, vacant commercial properties available for rent, and free WiFi points - indeed, everything today’s visitor, tourist traveller or businessperson is interested in or requires to make them feel at home in the town and encourage them to return.

The ‘Tisočletje dobrih kupčij’ project is also a means of digitally transforming the presentation of businesses’ products and services, and constitutes a major step forward for commerce in the town. Although many of us take social media for granted, we have found training and assistance in setting up communications with social media users to be enormously useful for the local community, particularly small businesses, providers and other stakeholders in the town centre. Indeed, it proved to be extremely beneficial during the period of restrictions resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, when it was impossible to welcome customers into shops and other businesses. The workshops, seminars and talks organised by the KIKšstarter Kamnik cooperative in collaboration with the Municipality of Kamnik have always been very well attended, providing listeners

and participants with the knowledge they require to prepare information for social media and design marketing strategies. Not infrequently, small business-owners were further inspired by talking to their counterparts in other sectors. KIKšstarter has already organised more than 20 workshops and seminars this year alone. Participation was free of charge to all.



‘Tisočletje dobrih kupčij’, www.trgovski-center-kamnik.si (Photo: KIKšstarter Cooperative)

Positive impact of the ‘Kamniški Desetak Maister’

In November 2020, a winning idea, one that binds town centre businesses together by means of a gift voucher, was created as part of an event devised under the auspices of the CINEMA project. The ‘Kamniški Desetak Maister’ (Maister Ten) is a voucher that can be bought and redeemed at a variety of merchants, food and catering establishments, craftspeople and other businesses in Kamnik town centre. The voucher has been supported by 20 Kamnik enterprises. Alongside the design and production of the voucher, some 17 events were organised by the businesses involved, bringing fresh life to the old town centre.

Although some businesses had been directly affected by the coronavirus measures, the voucher was very well received by businesses and customers alike. This was a unique gift and one that customers were more than happy to give to their loved ones, having as it did a direct and positive impact on the development of small enterprises in the town centre whose presence revitalises and increases the attractiveness of the old town centre. Purchasing the voucher made local residents aware that they too could determine and contribute to the town’s development.

Activities to foster the successful development of Kamnik will continue

The Municipality of Kamnik recognises that small businesses are the basis for a healthy and successful municipality, and provide impetus for the growth and development of the wider area as well. With its array of events and knowledge, as well as the co-working opportunities it provides, the KIKšstarter cooperative is making a considerable contribution to the realisation of this vision. As space is limited and they are keen to

contribute even more to the revitalisation of the town, we have embarked, as part of the CINEMA project, on an inventory of vacant commercial properties in the town centre. This was in response to the fact that there was no up-to-date database of vacant properties containing a basic description, the purpose of the property, photographs and the rental costs - things that will be of exceptional importance for the further development and revitalisation of Kamnik. The database provides a platform for connecting owners and those who require a space in which to work and produce.



Volčji Potok Arboretum (Photo: Kamnik Tourism and Sports Agency)

There is a very wide range of tourist products and services on offer in and around Kamnik. And while Terme Snovik, the Volčji Potok Arboretum and Velika Planina are perhaps the best-known and most impressive, we should also realise that Kamnik has a wonderful old town centre with a wide range of businesses, a rich history, wonderful views and a varied programme of events. We will continue with the 'KUL Petki' (Cool Fridays)

programme, which brings the working week to a close with superb food and music, as well as the traditional multi-day Kamfest festival, which takes place in August, and many other events. Cooperation with Slovenia's national rail operator will help to ensure that Kamnik receives more visitors this year than in previous years. Kamnik is one of the first towns to be served by the new train. A regular faster and more comfortable train now runs along the Ljubljana to Kamnik route, with easier access for people with disabilities, parents with prams and pushchairs, and cyclists.

With partners including the KIKšstarter cooperative, the Kotlovnica youth centre, Kamnik Tourism and Sports Agency, the Municipality of Kamnik has already done a great deal to bring new life to the town centre and to promote Kamnik more generally. Kamnik is known as a town that is constructing its future on a rich entrepreneurial tradition. This provides a solid basis for the development of new success stories that



Ljubljana to Kamnik by train (Photo: Municipality of Kamnik)

will attract more and more enterprising individuals to the town. We believe that, with the support of the CINEMA project, Kamnik can become an example of good practice that brings together the commercial and creative sectors with the aim of exerting a positive influence on the sustainable development of the town centre and the town as a whole.

We would like to take this opportunity to show you a video that sets out some of the success stories that Kamnik has fostered in its pursuit of urban regeneration.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=knBq1zGWc38&t=96s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIID4JkxKS8>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8_wHV3ZtCw

The Regional Development Agency for the Ljubljana Urban Region (RRA LUR) and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (GZS) are the Slovenian partners within the [CINEMA project](#), the aim of which is to use the creative industries to revitalise town and city centres. The Municipality of Kamnik is an associate partner of the project.

The CINEMA project is part of the Danube Transnational Programme ([Interreg Danube](#)), which is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.