

MUNICIPALITY OF KANJIŽA

BASIC INFORMATION

According to the 2011 census, the municipality of Kanjiža had 25,343 inhabitants. As of 31 December 2016, this number was 24,094. The municipality is populated by Hungarians (85%) and Serbians (7%), but there are also Roma, Romanians, Croatians, Montenegrins, and Albanians, among others. There is also a diversity of religion, including those of Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Muslim faith.

The municipality of Kanjiža is in the northern part of Vojvodina, in the North Bačka district bordering Hungary, and stands between the municipalities of Subotica, Senta and Novi Kneževac. It is comprised of 13 settlements: Horgoš, Male Pijace, Martonoš, Kanjiža, Mali Pesak, Orom, Doline, Novo Selo, Totovo Selo, Velebit, Vojvoda Zimonjić, Trešnjevac and Adorjan, including a large number of dispersed settlements. The administrative centre of the municipality is the town of Kanjiža.

The network of educational institutes includes 11 preschool facilities in nine of the 13 settlements, three elementary schools and the “Jožef Besedeš” secondary school that educates agricultural, machinery and veterinary technicians, and horticultural technicians within the framework of a four-year program.

According to 2014 statistics (on the development level of local self-government), the municipality belongs to the leading group comprising 20 units of local self-government whose level of development is above the republic's average. Towns such as Subotica, Senta, Novi Sad, Belgrade, etc. belong to this group. However, field research showed that local youth were largely oblivious this “positive feature”.

The municipality of Kanjiža is a major cultural centre for the Hungarian minority, as it is located in the centre of the “cultural triangle” Szeged (Hungary) - Subotica - Senta. On the same theme, in accordance with a decision of the National Council of the Hungarian Ethnic Minority in Serbia, three institutions of the municipality are marked as being of special importance for the Hungarian nationality on a local and regional level.

According to the statistical reports for December 2016, the number of unemployed persons in the register of the National Employment Service in the municipality of Kanjiža, was 1,889. Data from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia show that of the share of

unemployed by age group from the total number of unemployed in the municipality of Kanjiža in 2016, 24.2% were from the age group 15-29 age group, and 58.9% from the age group 30-54. (Due to different data sources, the methodological data comparison is possible only from 2008 until 2016.) In 2013, the risk-of-poverty rate was 30.3%, and the relative at-risk-of-poverty gap was 10.6%. In 2015, the share of social protection benefits for the total population was 14%.

Industrial zones in the municipality of Kanjiža occupy a territory of 245.83 ha (22% of the overall municipality territory). The most important companies for the local economy are those operating in the areas of construction, material production, and food processing (30% of municipal GDP). Development is most dynamic in the building materials, tiles, ceramics and hydro-insulation materials industry. Since 2010, 40 municipal companies have implemented export-import activities, with an absolute amount of 33.6 million dollars of exports and 28.9 million dollars of imports, constituting coverage of imports by exports of 116.3%. The names of some the biggest industrial actors/companies are: Rosan armature (Kanjiža), Telek paprika (Martonoš), Vitamin (Horgoš), Tegola-FIM (Kanjiža), Martis-Commerce (Martonoš), Keramika Kanjiža Plus (Kanjiža), Potisje-Tondach (Kanjiža). More than 85% of GDP in the municipality is generated by companies in private ownership. Foreign firms are interested in agriculture and trade, as the municipal territory has good agricultural land, and significant fossil fuel and clay resources can be found. Tourism in the municipality is based mainly on spas with medicinal water: "Banja-Kanjiža", a special hospital for medical rehabilitation, the hotels Lupus and Aquapannon, and the river Tisza. In 2016, the municipality of Kanjiža had 349 active companies and 385 active entrepreneurs, 22 of them newly established companies.

The municipality of Kanjiža is situated close to the border, and migrants use it as a stopover on their way to the European Union. Serbia is still not perceived as a country attractive to immigrants. According to the Ministry of the Interior, in the period between 2010 and 2015, the number of persons caught attempting to cross the border illegally between Serbia and its neighbouring countries rose from 2,682 to 14,958. This is owing to the geographical position of the country, with refugees and migrants from the Middle East attempting to get to the European Union via Hungary. Another problem is the social needs of the elderly. The municipal Development Strategy reports that 143 elderly people have no family members to turn to for help, 315 have no means of livelihood and 505 are chronically ill or are disabled. These are the official data, and with an increasing number of elderly people applying for social aid, these figures are only set to rise.

The Roma colony in Horgoš consists of Roma of poor educational and social awareness. The community is self-isolating, living mostly on social welfare.

Attractive features of the municipality: strong NGOs, good cultural programmes, a wide range of camps for kids and youth, different sports clubs, a youth office, good relationships with Hungarian NGOs.

Unattractive features of the municipality: a homogeneous environment, a lack of knowledge of the Serbian language, passivity, unemployment, a lack of financial resources for leisure.