

# THE SYNAGOGUE IN KDYNĚ CZECH REPUBLIC



The synagogue in the small Czech town of Kdyně (German: Neugedein) in Okres Domažlice in the Pilsen region was built in 1862/63. It has been a listed building since 1997. [1] The synagogue is located at 12 Masaryk Street. [2]

From 1862 to 1863 the Jewish community of Kdyně built a synagogue in neo-Romanesque style near the main square. [3] It was financed by donations from community members. The synagogue was officially opened on January 21, 1863 and in 1871 a memorial plaque was placed with the names of the synagogue co-founders Isak Augstein, Eliáš Augstein, Eliáš Klauber, Israel Lewit, Michal Hahn, Lipman Klauber, Jakub Hutter, Markus Klauber, Josef Hutter and Simon Augstein. [4]

After the First World War, the synagogue served as accommodation for Galician refugees.

After the Jewish community of Kdyně was merged with the Jewish community of Klatovy in 1929, services were only held in the Kdyně synagogue on major public holidays, the last in 1936.

During the Second World War it served as a warehouse. [5]

## **After the end of the Second World War to the present**

In 1946 the synagogue became the property of the Czechoslovak Hussite Church. Their proposal in the early 1960s to recognize the synagogue as a cultural monument was not approved.

It was not until 1993 that the Pilsen Monument Authority and then the Pilsen Jewish Community turned to the almost completely preserved synagogue at the suggestion of the Domažlice district, and they received great support from the Jewish Museum in Prague. The synagogue was sold in 1994 to a private owner who wanted to convert it into a beer pub. Eventually the Kdyně community bought back the synagogue and had it partially restored. In 1997 the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic declared the synagogue a national cultural monument at the suggestion of the Plzeň Monument Authority.

In 2015, there is a small museum on the local history and the history of the Jewish community in the synagogue building.

The rooms of the rabbinate and the Jewish school have been preserved in the outbuilding. There is now an information center there.

### **Furnishing**

The synagogue in Kdyně is one of the best-preserved monuments of Jewish architecture in the western part of Bohemia. The entire interior is almost in its original condition. These include the original column construction, the wooden Torah shrine in the classical style with parts of the plastic decoration and painting, the composition of the floor made of colored plaster, partly stone, partly wood, the lectern, six benches in the hall, four benches on the gallery and the original Painting of the vault, the work of the painter Amerling from Domažlice. The original window frames, railing of the podium, candlesticks at the Torah shrine and chandeliers have not been preserved. The original cult objects from the Kdyner Synagogue are kept in the Jewish Museum in Prague.

### **Outbuildings**

A one-story outbuilding was attached to the synagogue, with a Jewish school on the first floor. The rabbi lived and worked on the first floor. A mikvah was discovered and restored in the basement of the building. [7]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p9u6KX-cDRU>