

Strategic upgrade boosts **HRASTNIK1860** furnace efficiency and output



A refurbished furnace has enabled HRASNİK1860 to restore production capacity, improve efficiency and extend operational life. This restart highlights energy cost challenges, workforce constraints and decarbonisation ambitions – all whilst reinforcing the company's industrial importance and positioning it for continued, sustained growth in international glass markets.

Steklarna Hrastnik has restarted its smaller oxy-fuel furnace following a partial refurbishment – marking a measured return of production capacity and reinforcing operational stability. The unit, temporarily shut down for upgrades, now re-enters service with improved efficiency and reliability.

EXTENDING FURNACE LIFE AND CAPACITY

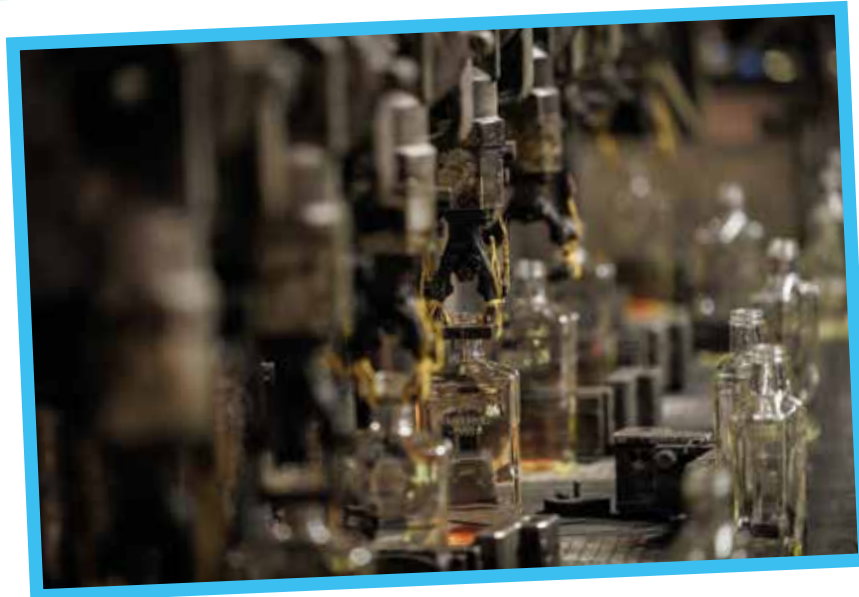
The refurbishment programme has extended the furnace's operational lifespan by four to five years while increasing melting capacity by approximately 120 tonnes per day. The 120-tonne oxy-fuel furnace is now linked to four production lines, supporting a gradual scaling of output. Initial

production batches completed over the weekend confirmed system readiness, with two lines currently active and further capacity

scheduled to come online progressively.

TECHNICAL UPGRADES AND EXECUTION

The project involved a technically demanding cold repair carried out in three distinct phases. Internal teams first prepared the furnace for intervention, after which external contractors from across Europe undertook nearly three weeks of refractory repairs. This was followed by a two-week heating process, bringing the furnace from ambient temperature to 1,300°C. Cullet was then introduced, and within three days, glass production resumed across connected lines. The complexity of the operation underscored the coordination between in-house expertise and specialised external partners.



Christian Fröba



Sašo Fekonja

RESILIENCE

ENERGY PRESSURES AND DECARBONISATION NEEDS

The restart introduces increased demand for natural gas and electricity, placing the company within a challenging energy pricing environment in Slovenia. According to CEO Christian Froba, securing competitively priced energy remains critical, particularly as the company seeks to advance decarbonisation. While the furnace is capable of incorporating electrically driven melting processes, broader adoption depends on access to affordable, low-carbon power. Engagement with government and industry bodies continues as part of efforts to align energy policy with the needs of energy-intensive manufacturing.

WORKFORCE AND REGIONAL IMPACT

The phased restart also high-

lights workforce constraints, as additional personnel are required to operate all four production lines. Recruitment efforts are extending across Europe to address this gap, reflecting a broader industry challenge in securing skilled labour. The development carries significant regional implications, particularly for Hrastnik and the Zasavje area, where the glassworks

remains a longstanding industrial pillar. With more than 500 employees, the company plays a central role in sustaining local economic activity and infrastructure development. Steklarna Hrastnik will continue to align production levels with market conditions and energy considerations while maintaining supply reliability and quality standards. The furnace restart strengthens operational resilience and positions the company for continued growth in competitive international markets. ■

ABOUT HRASTNIK1860

Part of the Vaider Group, Hrastnik1860 has been a trusted global partner since 1860 in the development and production of premium speciality glass packaging for the most demanding beverage segments. The company produces technically complex products from some of the purest glass in the world and offers a comprehensive range of services, from concept development, design, engineering and production to graphic design, decoration and logistics support. Its approach is built on flexibility, responsiveness and delivering high-quality, tailored solutions.



ABOUT VAIDER GROUP

Bringing together Steklarna Hrastnik and Vaider Srpska Fabrika Stakla, Vaider Group enables brands to create premium user experiences in glass packaging. It is recognised for its commitment to quality, sustainability and innovation. Operating across manufacturing, trading and services, Vaider Group is a reliable partner in the global glass industry.

HRASTNIK1860
MEMBER OF VAIDER GROUP

**STEKLARNA
HRASTNIK, D. O. O.**

14 Cesta 1 Maja
Hrastnik 1430 - SLOVENIA
Tel.: +386 35654600
info@hrastnik1860.com

www.hrastnik1860.com



VAIDER GROUP AG

Alpenquai 30
Lucerne, LU 6005 - SWITZERLAND
info@vaider.com

www.vaider.com