

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2024

Destination Radlje ob Dravi



November 2024

INTRODUCTION

The Municipality of Radlje ob Dravi, by joining the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism, has committed to promoting sustainable practices in tourism. In 2022, it renewed the sustainable silver label Slovenia Green Destinations, which is an indicator and confirmation of the efforts made in the field of sustainability, covering all major areas of municipal development.

In 2024, the Public Institute for Sports, Culture, Tourism, and Youth of Radlje ob Dravi, in close cooperation with the Municipality of Radlje ob Dravi, as the driver of development and management of the tourist destination, implements and follows strategic guidelines derived from the Vision and Development Strategy of the Municipality of Radlje ob Dravi 2022-2040, the Tourism Development Strategy of Radlje ob Dravi 2022-2027, the regional strategy of Koroška, and the national Strategy of Slovenian Tourism 2022-2028, with a special emphasis on ensuring the implementation of sustainable practices and the implementation of sustainable models in development.

In carrying out activities, we pursue the goals defined by the Action Plan 2022-2025 of the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism, which are focused on covering all six areas of the V2 Green Destinations Standard. The emphasis is on preserving natural resources, rational land use, and involving the local community, thereby contributing to the quality of life of residents and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the tourist offer. Our efforts are supported by implementation projects that actively involve the local population and align the interests of the community and visitors to the destination. The Municipality of Radlje ob Dravi is establishing itself as a model of responsible and sustainably oriented tourism development, based on the principles of quality, local inclusion, and environmental responsibility.

Priority areas we have implemented in 2024:

- Tourism Diagnosis with consolidation of strategic orientations (2024 - 2027).
- Development of a new destination identity and, accordingly, the development of a new destination brand for Radlje.
- Entry of sustainable and sustainable forest management in the Register of Intangible Heritage.
- Implementation of all active projects in the municipality that contribute to sustainable development.
- Targeted and coordinated development of the tourist offer, creating unique and authentic experiences.
- Integrating and promoting the involvement of tourism operators and other stakeholders in the development of the tourism offer.

- Implementation of the measures set out in the Action Plan 2022 - 2025 under the Slovenian Green Tourism Scheme.
- Strengthening cooperation with major organisations at local, regional and national level.

Field 1: DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

Destination Radlje ob Dravi has entered a very active development cycle in 2024 and is simultaneously implementing and managing three major projects of basic tourism valorisation with a focus on revitalising the natural and cultural heritage. The projects focus on the development of cultural and sports tourism and pursue the idea of facilitating the development of high added value tourism experiences.

In this year we have developed a very important document in the field of destination management in cooperation with the municipality, **"Tourism Diagnosis with consolidation of strategic orientations 2024 - 2027"**, where we have formulated strategic orientations for future development based on a detailed analysis of tourism in the past period. Within the document, we have set out in more detail the sustainability indicators that will be monitored on an annual basis in the future. In the diagnosis we have made an inventory of all tourist resources in the destination, anthropological and natural resources, a list of accommodation infrastructure, food catering, sports and recreational facilities and an inventory of hiking and cycling trails. By the end of the year, a list of concrete objectives and actions will be drawn up as part of the document, including more specific cooperation activities with tourism stakeholders.

A detailed analysis of tourist arrivals 2018-2023 has been prepared, covering the structure of visitors and the volume of tourist arrivals.

At the same time, we have developed a new destination identity and, in line with this, the development of a **new destination brand for Radlje**. At the same time, we developed the [visitradlje.com website](https://visitradlje.com), which is the central tourist portal for visitors to the destination and is designed in two language versions, Slovenian and English. The website will also offer voice communication for users with limitations, the blind and visually impaired. The website is expected to be active by the end of 2024.

As a partner, we have been actively involved in the preparation of the new **Tourism Development Strategy Koroška 2024 - 2030+**, which is being implemented for the whole region of Koroška under the auspices of the Regional Development Agency Koroška. We participated in two workshops for the preparation of the strategy and helped to promote the business and the population in the context of the municipality and the public institute ŠKTM Radlje ob Dravi in solving the survey questionnaire.



We organised an Expert Consultation, **Encouraging residents and tourism providers to develop sustainable models - opportunities and challenges for sustainable tourism development in the destination Radlje ob Dravi**. We presented the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism and invited stakeholders to obtain one of the sustainability labels. We touched upon topics such as: encouraging more responsible behaviour towards the environment and society, presenting examples of good practice, encouraging responsible energy use and raising awareness for lower consumption, responsible solid waste management, encouraging regular monitoring and measurement and offsetting of carbon footprint, and discussing the challenges and opportunities of sustainable development.



Throughout the year, members of the Green Team regularly attended **training courses, workshops and training** organised by the Slovenian Tourist Board and the Slovenia Green Consortium.

Employees of the Radlje ob Dravi municipal administration, employees of the ŠKTM Radlje ob Dravi and members of the Green Team signed the Code of Ethics in Tourism. The Code of Ethics for Tourist Guides has been updated. The destination has acquired a **Regional Tourist Guide for Carinthia** in 2024 as part of the training organised by RRA Koroška. The Code of Ethics has also been signed by the Regional Tourist Guide for Carinthia.

From June 2024, we are conducting **a survey** of all tourism stakeholders, the business sector, local people and visitors, to monitor the satisfaction of all three types of stakeholders on the quality and sustainability of the offer. Stakeholders were invited to take part in the survey via social networks, the local newspaper Novičkar, the websites of the Municipality of Radlje ob Dravi and the ŠKTM Radlje ob Dravi. We physically interviewed visitors and local residents and distributed and forwarded questionnaires to groups visiting Radlje and local events.

The general public was kept **regularly informed** about developments in the municipality in the areas of climate change, sustainability and tourism. Information

was provided through the local newspaper *Novičkar*, which is distributed to every household, and through the websites of the Municipality of Radlje ob Dravi and the ŠKTM Public Institute, as well as through social networks.

In 2024, the ŠKTM Public Institute received the Gold Award of the Slovenian Chamber of Commerce and Industry - Carinthian Chamber of Commerce for the sustainable innovation "**Radlje ob Dravi: where beauty and sustainability meet**". The innovation sets a new milestone in sustainable tourism, combining ecological infrastructure with a network of local providers and green tourism packages and products. This integrated approach not only improves the life of the community and protects nature, but also sets Radlje ob Dravi as an example of excellence in sustainable tourism at a global level and further strengthens the commitment to nature conservation and promoting sustainable lifestyles.



The involvement of regional partners in the planned projects also reflects a broad cooperation in the sustainable development of tourism and the development of the Radlje ob Dravi area.

Our actions and activities are aimed at achieving the objectives of the accompanying previously adopted strategic documents, including **the Radlje ob Dravi LEPK 2023; the Local Programme for Culture 2022 - 2026; the Strategy for Youth in the Municipality of Radlje ob Dravi 2022 - 2026; the Healthy Cities Strategy 2022 - 2026, the Volunteer-Friendly Municipality, the Active Municipality in the Field of Climate Change and Sustainable Energy, the Municipality tailored to the needs of people with disabilities, the Youth-Friendly Municipality, the Age-Friendly Municipality, and the UNICEF Child-Friendly City.**

Field 2: NATURE AND LANDSCAPES

We have prepared a Tourism **Impact Analysis**, which directly relates to the criteria in the Green Scheme, 1.5 Inventory of Tourism Facilities and Resources and 1.6 Tourism Impact Analysis, where a detailed inventory of tourism facilities and resources is made for the areas A1 Protected Areas, A2 Wildlife, A3 Captive Animals, A4 Landscape and Scenic Areas. For all areas an analysis of tourism impacts (positive and negative), current and expected in 2-4 years, is made. In addition, policies, protection and management are identified to ensure sustainability over the next 2-4 years.

The public company KIČ - Public Sewerage and Sewage Treatment Plant Radlje, takes care of the landscaping of the green and public areas and the beautification of the municipality, for which the municipality has also employed a horticultural expert. Following regular field inspections, it was not necessary to update the list of **non-native invasive species**, which was established in 2023. The conversion of urban green areas into honey meadows was maintained and upgraded, which is recorded in the Rainbow Meadows register.

In 2024, we continued our activities in the area of improvement, maintenance and upgrading of **hiking and cycling trails** and the installation of benches and protective fences. The cycling link between Radlje ob Dravi and the village of Vas has been completed.

Several activities were organised on the occasion of **Earth Day**. For the third year in a row, the municipality of Radlje ob Dravi, in cooperation with the Slovenian State Forests, the Forest Institute, the Radlje ob Dravi Primary School and volunteers, carried out a campaign to plant 2000 trees.

We successfully carried out the Clean-up Campaign and invited all associations and citizens to participate.

We also organised the **"Zeleni utrip"** ("**Green pulse**") event and planted 150 trees on the former ski slope in Vuhred in cooperation with the Forest Institute, our sponsor Toyota Adria and the Brigade of Women and Men. Fruit trees are also part of the planting, which are part of the municipal orchards already established in the municipality. The general public and citizens were invited to the event.



Source: Koroški pokrajinski muzej_foto_Tomo Jeseničnik

Field 3: ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

In Radlje ob Dravi, we are aware that our way of life today contributes to climate change on a daily basis, and that its impact is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore. We are already feeling the effects of these changes in rising temperatures, frequent weather fluctuations, droughts, floods, storms and the vulnerability of ecosystems. All these changes further underline the need for adaptation and our main goal is to reduce risks and prevent further damage to our future.



Source: Radlje ob Dravi_foto Klara Kukovec

In the **Tourism Impact Analysis**, we have identified the main sources and policies that address sustainability in the areas of B1 Noise, B2 Light and Light Pollution, B3 Water Quality, B5 Wastewater, B6 Waste Management and B7 Green Energy.

In 2024, we continued our efforts to raise awareness of the importance of **climate change adaptation** among all stakeholders, and followed this up with an expert consultation on how each individual and society can contribute to climate change mitigation through their own actions. Encouraging waste reduction, waste separation, solid waste management, responsible management of electricity consumption, organising environmentally friendly events and the importance of introducing sustainable practices in business operations were some of the major topics we raised awareness about through the local newspaper Novičkar and online networks.



At the **Expert Consultation**, Encouraging residents and tourism providers to develop sustainable models - opportunities and challenges for sustainable tourism development in the destination Radlje ob Dravi, we presented examples of good practice. Energap - the Energy and Climate Agency for Podravje presented the topics of promoting responsible energy use and raising awareness for lower consumption, encouraging regular monitoring and measurement, and offsetting the carbon footprint. Participants were invited to visit their website, where they have a number of materials on energy management for the public sector, businesses and citizens, as well as schools. Kocerod gave a presentation on responsible solid waste management.

In 2024, we joined the project "**Connecting with nature - implementing green and blue solutions in the municipality of Radlje ob Dravi**". Nature-based solutions (NBS) are approaches that use natural processes and ecosystems to address environmental, social and economic challenges.

These solutions are based on the protection, restoration or sustainable management of natural ecosystems and the principles of the New European Bauhaus (NEB), a European Union initiative that combines sustainability, aesthetics and inclusiveness in the design of living spaces. The project to develop and create new green spaces in the settlement is key to the sustainable development of the urban environment. The project will also provide sustainable benefits in the field of environmental quality, by planting trees and green spaces, contributing to air quality, positively influencing the physical and mental health of the inhabitants, fostering social cohesion and a sense of belonging to the community. Educational activities in green spaces raise awareness of sustainability and environmental protection. Video presentation is available at: <https://youtu.be/cbvp1llwl8k>

The project **Agglomeration 10991** Zgornja Vižinga - Municipality of Radlje ob Dravi is in the final phase of construction works. All the permits for use have been obtained. The main objectives of the project are: adequate discharge and treatment of municipal waste water and reduction of the potential for pollution of drinking water sources.

Due to the great importance of destinations' preparedness for crises, we have prepared a document "**Crisis Plan for Tourism in the Municipality of Radlje ob Dravi**", which is defined in the Slovenian Tourism Green Scheme standard as indicator 5.17, according to which destinations must take a strategic approach to crisis management and prepare a crisis plan for tourism. It identifies mechanisms to mitigate crises and risks that may (un)expectedly affect the tourism sector in a destination. Previously, we organised a workshop on this topic for the preparation of a crisis plan in the Municipality of Radlje ob Dravi, with the participation of the Municipality of Radlje ob Dravi, the Civil Protection, the Radlje ob Dravi Fire Brigade and the Radlje ob Dravi Health Centre. The document was prepared in cooperation with Goodplace d.o.o. Ljubljana and PROVOBIS d.o.o. Jesenice.

Our commitment to the concept of sustainability is reflected in the many projects we are implementing in the destination to develop **sustainable mobility** through strategic cooperation with Elan, Nomago, Toyota, Slovenian Railways and RRA Koroška. The e-bike rental product is designed to combine sustainable mobility and the principles of the blue economy, enabling tourists to arrive at our destination in a sustainable way.

In 2024, we continued our improved summer rental system and further strengthened our electric bike fleet, increasing the number of electric bike charging points and upgrading charging points for electric cars. Visitors have a choice of different packages, from a few hours, to a weekend package and a multi-day bike rental package.



For those who prefer more rugged terrain, we had 5 Elan top-of-the-range mountain e-bikes at our disposal in the Marenberg Radlje Centre, for exploring the beautiful nature and cycling trails of Pohorje and Kozjak.

Nomago's 8 urban e-bikes, which allow convenient and contactless rental, have been set up in two popular locations.

Vuhred: Ideal for those arriving by train, as it can be easily combined with our tourist product – **By Train to Swim.**

Water park Radlje: Ideal for those who want to combine cycling with a visit to the Water Park, where they can refresh and relax. There is also 1 bike available for rent at the Municipality of Radlje ob Dravi.

After last year's floods, when we had to close the Water Park prematurely, this year we have started the rental system again, which we have upgraded by preparing, together with the tenant of the Water Park and Slovenian Railways, **specially favourable tourist packages** for swimming in the Water Park and overnight stays in the accommodation capacities of Hostel Radlje and glamping cottages of the Green Resort.

The municipality adopted an update of the CPS in 2024 and we are currently preparing a new Integrated Transport Strategy. The municipality was successful in applying for a call for proposals from the Ministry of Environment, Climate and Energy and received funding for the preparation of the CPS.

The Integrated Transport Strategy is a strategic document that aims to address the municipality's transport-related challenges. The aim of the CPS is to ensure safe, accessible and environmentally friendly mobility and a transport network that will improve the quality of life of the inhabitants and promote the economic development of the municipality. In addition, the strategy will contribute to reducing the negative impacts of transport on the environment, which will improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Involvement of residents and stakeholders (through the completion of surveys and participation in the consultation) will ensure that the measures taken will meet the needs of the community and contribute to improved and sustainable mobility in the municipality.

Integrated Transport Strategy

A new Integrated Transport Strategy for the municipality and the development of a mobility vision are under preparation. Public consultation organised. Invitation to fill in the survey.

There are e-bike charging points at 6 locations

- TIC Radlje ob Dravi (Marenberg Youth Cultural Centre)
- Šv. Anton na Pohorju near the playground
- Remšnik
- Vuhred by the playground
- Dobrava near MPIK-2
- Water park



European Mobility Week

As part of European Mobility Week, free one-day e-bike rental was available.

This year, we completed work on the **Radlje ob Dravi - Vas cycle path**, offering citizens and visitors an additional option for active leisure. We have developed 4 new cycling routes through Kozjak and Pohorje, which, in addition to our online platform, we have placed as **Bike Radlje** on the Drava Bike platform of the Drava Bike Route.

Monitoring sustainability indicators

No.	name of the indicator	Indicator value						TARGET
		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
1	% of protected nature in the area of the destination	59,55	59,55	59,55	59,55	59,55	*65,4	65,4
2	% sewage treated to secondary stage	55,7	55,7	55,7	55,7	55,7	62,9	63
3	% solid waste collected separately for recovery	55	55,5	57	57	57	57	60
4	number of places for bike rental	2	3	3	4	4	6	4
5	number of bikes available for hire	8	10	12	12	15	18	16
6	number of museums	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
7	number of Slovenia Green Accommodation labels	0	0	0	1	1	1	2
8	number of Slovenia Green Travel Agency symbols	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	number of Slovenia Green Cuisine symbols	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
10	number of Slovenia Green Attraction signs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	number of Slovenia Green Park signs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	number of characters Slovenia Green Beach	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
13	number of months in which 80% of people visit	3	3,5	4	4	4	5	5

*data is coordinated with the Institute for Nature Conservation.

In the work programme of the ŠKTM Radlje ob Dravi Public Institute for the period 2025 and 2026, among the activities planned is the establishment of a system for monitoring tourism indicators, both sustainable ones, which are already monitored on an annual basis (table above), and indicators focused on monitoring the development of the destination and economic indicators of the impact of tourism.

The indicators will be harmonised and adapted in line with the newly established National Information System (NIS), which will allow for comparison with other destinations in Slovenia. Implementation is foreseen by the end of 2024.

Field 4: CULTURE AND TRADITION

In implementing projects for the restoration of cultural heritage monuments, we worked closely with the relevant organisations, the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, the Carinthian Provincial Museum and the Slovenian Ethnographic Museum, among others.

In the **Tourism Impact Analysis**, we identified the sources and negative and positive impacts of tourism on cultural heritage. The document also identifies policies that address areas C1 Intangible heritage and C2 Intangible heritage,



In 2024, we started the renovation of **Radlje Manor - the cultural and forest centre of the Upper Drava Valley**, which, once completed, will make a significant contribution to social well-being, as the main objective of the project is to develop museum, cultural and educational content and preserve cultural heritage. The manor will become a focal point for the presentation of sustainable forest management and a meeting point for the local community, hikers and tourists. The European walking route E6, which passes by Radlje Manor, will be highlighted in particular, further promoting awareness of the importance of nature and forest protection.

Slovenian forestry has achieved exceptional recognition and validation this year with the entry of sustainable forest management in the **Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage** of the Ministry of Culture. It is an integrated and extremely complex form of forest management, requiring in-depth specialist knowledge of habitats and tree species, appropriate mixtures of the latter, silvicultural forms and other specialist knowledge. The initiative for the registration was initiated by the Municipality of Radlje ob Dravi, the process was coordinated by the Slovenian Ethnographic Museum, and the writing of the initiative and the coordination of stakeholders was led by the Carinthian Regional Museum. The Slovenian Forest Institute, the association for sustainable forest management Pro Silva Slovenija and the Department of Forestry and Renewable Forest Resources of the Ljubljana Faculty of Biotechnology also contributed to the preparation of the materials.

The complete renovation of St Mary's Church is completed. of the Sign of Mary, which has been re-erected in front of the St Michael's Church. The restoration of the of the church square, which was renamed Jožef Gomboc Square.



Source: Umanotera.org

The destination also organises events in a sustainable way to preserve intangible heritage. The two most important events this year are the **Hmeljarski likof**, which is about preserving the hop-growing tradition, and the **Radljevanje Festival**, a cultural journey through Radlje, where we support Slovenian performers and Slovenian music. In 2020, the municipality of Radlje ob Dravi committed to reducing plastic and received the No Plastic certificate. We encourage other organisers to organise more climate-friendly events.



Sustainable activities in the field of **preserving the intangible heritage of fruit-growing** were also carried out this year by the Radela Institute, a training and employment institute for people with disabilities in Radlje ob Dravi, which has 12 employees. The institute works to ensure the sustainable cultivation of orchards, which are an important part of the local heritage and contribute to the preservation of traditional fruit-growing in the municipality.

In 2017, the Municipality of Radlje already planted 350 new apple trees in the Municipal Orchards, which will soon reach full fruition, and this year they have recorded a remarkable. They harvested almost three tonnes of fruit and produced more than 1,000 litres of apple juice. They also produced 500 litres of cider and 100 litres of boutique cider vinegar.

The Radela Institute and the **Radlje ob Dravi Fruit Growing Centre** received a bronze medal for apple juice at the 28th International Evaluation of Juices, Soft Drinks and Packaged Waters, which took place as part of the 62nd AGRA International Agri-Food Fair in Gornja Radgona. The award confirms the high quality and is a great motivation for the future.



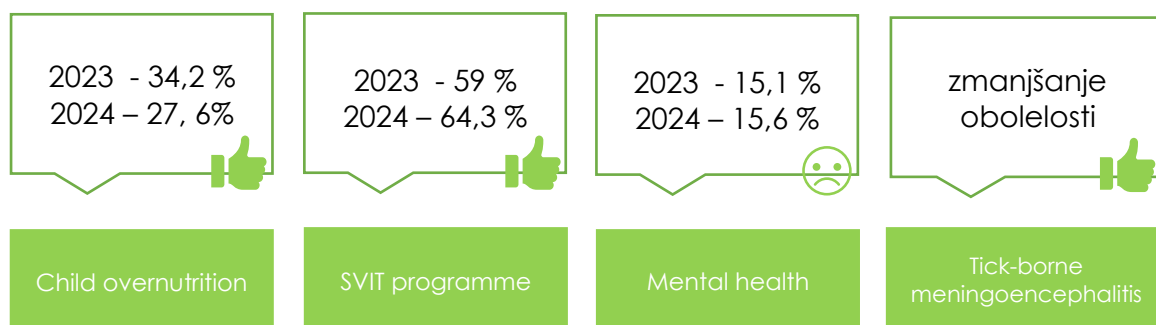
This year, the story of the fruit centre has been included in our tourism programmes, where visitors can visit the fruit centre with its fruit processing plant and taste apple juice and cider. The products are also part of the Municipality's protocol gifts.

A beautiful story was created in cooperation with our partner Toyota Slovenia, when they produced their own homemade apple juice in the Fruit Centre, using apples from the municipality's orchards, as sustainable gifts for their business partners. This reflects our shared values and our commitment to supporting local communities and sustainable practices.

Field 5: SOCIAL CLIMATE

Radlje ob Dravi boasts a rich social climate based on sustainable development, local community involvement and concern for the quality of life of all its inhabitants. A number of activities carried out in 2024 confirm its commitment to **social responsibility**.

With the Strategy of the Municipality of Radlje ob Dravi within the **Healthy Cities** project, in 2024 we followed the implementation of the activities that we have written in the Action Plan 2022-2026. In our municipality, within the Healthy Cities project, we are monitoring 4 priority areas: child overnutrition, mental health, participation in the Svit programme and vaccination for tick-borne meningoencephalitis. Starting this year, we have seen the first positive results in the indicators measured.



- the percentage of overnourished children has decreased significantly - from 34.2% in the 2023 indicators to 27.6% this year; children's physical fitness has also increased significantly, from 46.1% to 57.1%
- Svit response rate increased from 59% to 64.3%;
- a slight increase in the number of people receiving medication for mental disorders - from 15.1% to 15.6%
- the trend of infections in the municipality is on a downward trend, publicity has proved very successful in reducing the incidence

K4.14 Klopni meningoencefalitis		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
—	Občina Radlje ob Dravi	n	32.3	30.3	27.75	21.5	20	16.7	13.8	8.04
- - - -	Regija Koroška	n	28	26.9	26.25	23.5	20.4	22.5	20.5	20.68
—	Upravna enota Radlje ob Dravi	n	29.9	25.8	23.91	21.6	19.7	16.3	13.3	9.08
- - - -	Slovenija	n	10.5	10.1	9.67	9.2	8	8.3	7.3	7.43

According to the indicators, there is an increased problem of alcohol consumption. The number of road accidents involving alcohol has increased from 4.4% to 6.5%. There is also an increase in the number of diseases directly attributable to alcohol (from 1.7% to 1.9%).

This year we became the only municipality in the Drava Valley with a **Multigenerational Centre (VGC+)**. The VGC+ project Coexistence of Generations involves MOCIS, the Centre for Adult Education, as the project promoter and the ŠKTM Radlje ob Dravi Public Institute as a partner.

The Radlje ob Dravi Multigenerational Centre offers a space for intergenerational socialising, education and support and is aimed at all generations in the Carinthian region. The project aims to contribute to improving the quality of life of all users, especially vulnerable groups, and to prevent the slide into social exclusion and poverty.

At the end of May 2024, we opened the Radlje multi-generational urban sports park - the Radlje Skate Park - in Radlje ob Dravi. The skate park is a novelty in Slovenia as it is made entirely of aluminium, which ensures a longer service life and also underlines the municipality's sustainable approach in the urban equipment segment. At the opening ceremony, we were joined by Cene Prevc, the ambassador of healthy and safe sport, who stressed the importance of active leisure for all generations.



Partnership with Toyota Slovenia

It represents an important contribution to the efficient and sustainable delivery of social protection services. Hybrid cars are designed to provide home care and other social care services.



PROSTOFER

Providing transport services for the elderly and people with reduced mobility. The freephone enables greater mobility and accessibility to necessary services. The service is provided using a Toyota hybrid car.



By analysing the results of the questionnaires in more detail, I will also gain a better insight into what visitors, local residents and businesses think about the municipality's sustainability efforts. The municipality has taken an important step by starting work on

the Aktivarium multi-generational motor park this year, which we have placed directly next to the Radlje Water Park and partly in the nearby forest. The park encourages exercise and is adapted to different generations, and in addition to exercise, we will also promote the multi-purpose nature of the forest. An important part will also focus on the therapeutic aspect of the forest - forest baths, forest yoga. Part of the land is a degraded area, which will be redeveloped and new tourist products, recreational and cultural-artistic programmes on the theme of the forest will be developed.



In 2024, we successfully renewed our **Youth Friendly Municipality certificate** for another 4 years. For young people, the municipality offers various programmes and activities coordinated by the Public Institute ŠKTM Radlje ob Dravi. In addition to the Marenberg Centre, which is always open to local and surrounding youth, the municipality offers a number of other facilities and activities aimed at young people and their closer involvement in the life of the local community.

Since experience shows that adequate information is crucial for involving young people in activities and programmes designed for them, this year the JZ ŠKTM Radlje ob Dravi, in cooperation with the Municipality of Radlje ob Dravi, started publishing a new medium, the **local youth informer "Mlade Radlje" (Young Radlje)**. It will be published approximately every six months.

The pupils of the Radlje ob Dravi Primary School entered the 38th Tourism Competition "Tasty Treasures - Local Culinary Souvenirs with a Sustainable Touch" as part of the **"Tourism is Helped by Your Own Head"** project. In the tourism project assignment, entitled "From buckthorn to Lio-apple", they presented their tourism products, which were created in cooperation with the boutique local company Lio - freeze-dried fruit. The project was also supported by the Municipality of Radlje ob Dravi.

For the third year in a row, we are bringing together local providers under the name **"Naša Tržnica" ("Our Market")**, which is aimed at innovative networking and promotion of local providers, as they form the basis for the holistic and long-term development of tourism in the Drava Valley. Our Marketplace already includes more than 30 local providers and is an indicator of how much local producers and craftsmen have to offer the inhabitants of the Drava Valley, while at the same time enabling the inhabitants to buy fresh, locally produced food and products without intermediaries directly from local providers. Vulnerable groups, the organisations ŠENT - Slovenian Association for Mental Health and the VDC - Radlje ob Dravi Care and Work Centre are offered free of charge space to sell and promote their products.

Field 6: OPERATION OF TOURIST ENTERPRISES AND COMMUNICATION

This year, we have a new tourist offer - **Apartments Verenluc**, which offers accommodation for 12 people in two apartments in an exceptional location, in a peaceful rural environment.

Green Resort - glamping cottages renewed the **Green Key** sustainability label and the Slovenia green Accommodation label in 2024.

Tourism providers were invited to join the **Slovenian Green Tourism Scheme** and to obtain one of the international sustainability labels recognised by the scheme, through various information channels and at an expert consultation organised for tourism stakeholders. The municipality and the ŠKTM Radlje ob Dravi Public Institution support providers in obtaining the label.

We have started preparing an application for the **Blue Flag** for the Waterpark - Biological Swimming Pool, which will replace the pilot label awarded to the swimming pool in the previous year. By obtaining this label, we aim to further raise awareness about the importance of protecting the bathing area, the quality of bathing water and ensuring safety and accessibility for all.

Within the framework of the projects under implementation, we are working on new tourist products that will enrich and upgrade the existing offer and thus increase the visibility of the destination. The content of the new experiences is tailored to all generations and will promote cooperation with local organisations and the economy, enabling their active involvement in the destination's tourism and cultural activities. With the new products, we are adopting the orientation towards redirecting tourist flows outside the main summer season by introducing programmes that will also be viable in spring, summer and autumn. This will contribute to a steady flow of visitors over a longer period of time, reduce the pressure on infrastructure during the summer months and at the same time allow for more stable revenues for local service providers, catering and accommodation establishments and retailers.

Restoration of Radlje Manor - the cultural and forest centre of the Upper Drava Valley: 3 tourism products (P1 Forest as a backdrop; P2 Family experience; P3 Hike)

Aktivarium - multi-purpose motor park: 6 tourist products (P1 Bee for a day; P2 Bee spa; P3 Active exploration of the river and forest; P4 Forest yoga; P5 Forest bath; P6 Let's explore the green)

In September 2024, we successfully submitted two applications to the call for proposals Interreg Slovenia-Austria 2021-2027.

Interreg AT-SLO - Nature friendly rowing (2025): development of 1 cross-border tourism product and 2 tourism products in Radlje ob Dravi.

The main objective is to strengthen the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation. The overall objectives of the project "Nature-friendly rowing" are to develop a new functional cross-border sustainable tourism product, which will allow a more sustainable and nature-friendly use of natural resources for sport and recreational activities on and along the Drava river, to channel visitor flows and to raise awareness among visitors and local residents about the nature-friendly use of natural resources. The project was submitted in cooperation with the Regional Development Agency RRA Koroška and RRA Podravje - Maribor, 2G Sport & Freizeit GmbH and Kärnten Werbung GmbH.

Interreg AT-SLO - iCYCLE2BEE (2025): development of cross-border tourism products in the field of cycling.

The project is an innovative cross-border initiative aimed at transforming cycle tourism through comprehensive primary research based on stakeholder engagement, cycling and digital infrastructure development, digital innovation and strategic marketing. The aim is to promote a more inclusive and sustainable environment for cycle tourism, and the development of a web application that will allow visitors to personalise cross-border cycling experiences.

Renovation of the Radlje Manor Park (2025): development and implementation of 2 cultural tourism products (P1 Tree Explorer; P2 Health under the Treetops).

In order to connect the whole area of Radlje Manor and the associated park next to the Manor, we submitted an application in November 2024 for the call for proposals **"Sustainable restoration and revitalisation of cultural monuments owned by municipalities and integration of cultural experiences into Slovenian tourism - Cohesion Region Eastern Slovenia (code JR-EKP-KS 2025-28)"**, which aims, in particular, to promote accessibility to heritage for all citizens, to encourage the development of local entrepreneurial initiative and to strengthen activities to promote and enhance cultural tourism.

CONCLUSION

The municipality of Radlje ob Dravi has for many years been working towards the sustainable development of the destination, with an emphasis on preserving natural resources, supporting the local economy and involving the local population in shaping the tourism offer. Key achievements include the successful implementation of sustainable projects that enable active leisure time in nature and offer visitors the opportunity to contribute to the conservation and development of the area by behaving responsibly when visiting the destination.

In the future, we will continue our efforts to promote sustainable tourism and to build on sustainable practices and involve communities in the creation of sustainable stories. Our focus will be on developing innovative, sustainable products that support both the local economy and tourism visibility. The priority remains to work with local suppliers and organisations to create a quality tourism offer and to create an environment that on the one hand provides a pleasant stay for locals, and on the other hand allows visitors to experience our efforts and take away with them unforgettable impressions and respect for our heritage and nature.

Prepared by:
Tonja Rojnič, dipl. org. turizma
Javni zavod ŠKTM Radlje ob Dravi