



Občina  
Radlje  
ob Dravi

# Candidature for

Extra Prize – Biodiversity – Thematic Award  
Presidents Prize 2015: “Biodiversity”

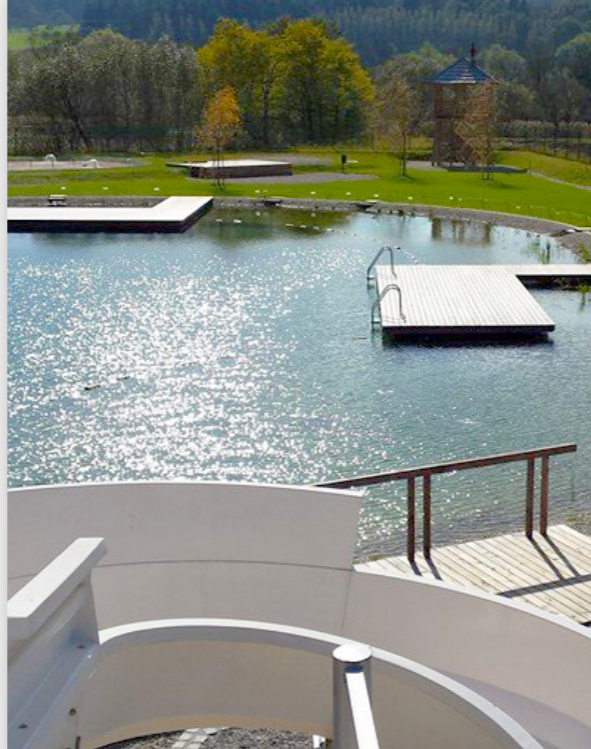


# Radlje ob Dravi Water park



In Slovenia, at an altitude of 371 m, in the heart of the Drava valley between the cities Dravograd and Maribor, and at the border with Austria, there lies a small city of Radlje ob Dravi. On one side, it is surrounded by Kozjak hill ridge, and on the other side there are the rolling hills of Pohorje with the most beautiful forests in Slovenia. The settlement of Radlje ob Dravi was firstly mentioned in official records over 850 years ago.

In the last seven years, Radlje ob Dravi Municipality set up a sports recreational area along the Radeljski potok stream, moreover, they created a tourism infrastructure in the area of the pond Reš. The project was already initially focused to eliminate the deficiency of the tourist offer in the region. The effects of long-term planning are visible as an expansion, variegation and raising the quality of the tourist offer in the municipality and the entire region, which would result in increasing the number of tourists and other visitors. Above all, we are proud of the sustainable development of the tourism economy.



## The Radlje ob Dravi water park project was held in phases.

**The first phase included the project called “Drava as an opportunity”**

(Drava kot priložnost), which was a developmental project of all the municipalities of the Upper Drava Valley, located directly along the river Drava. These municipalities are the following: Dravograd, Muta, Podvelka, Radlje ob Dravi in Vuzenica. The project started in 2008 and ended in 2013. Radlje ob Dravi municipality was responsible for the project Radlje ob Dravi water park, since it was the one to directly gain from the new tourism infrastructure and services corresponding to natural resources, in order to

improve the living conditions of its residents. The infrastructure was established along the Drava river and on it, and the construction of waterside areas was carried out: organizing and ensuring the access from the bay to the raft, wooden pier for mooring boats, and other regulation access points to the stream of the Drava river. We have built and established municipal transport and other infrastructure, namely road connections, parking spaces and a paved path from the parking lot to the Drava river. We have built and arranged auxiliary facility for tourism development – premises for catering and tourism, projecting roofs and toilet facilities. We have set up tourist information points equipped with information boards containing data and contact information about the sights in the area. We have built a natural swimming pool and a small swimming pool for toddlers with clean water, moreover we

equipped the premises with all the associated infrastructure. Not only that, we arranged the camp infrastructure as well as children’s and sports playgrounds. All the above was done in accordance with the guidelines of the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation, especially building a gazebo tower with a fine view over the area’s natural heritage (birds in the reed bed). This multipurpose facility also has its own natural water purification plant.

Tourist and catering facilities also include sanitary capacities sufficient for the needs of the bathing site, which is all connected with the wooden terrace. Outside there are parking areas, min. 53 parking spaces, of which 4 are reserved for people with disabilities. In the context of future external arrangements, there are sports fields such as volleyball court, petanque/boules area and a football field.





The execution of works was partially financed by the European Union from the European Regional Development Fund; the priority of the “Regional Development Programmes” under the Operational Programme for Strengthening Regional Development Potentials 2007–2013, development priority “Development of Regions”.

### **The second work phase consisted of the establishment of “bathing lake”.**

It represented setting up a large bathing lake, which would meet the needs of the seasonal tourism, since the small swimming pool, which was initially planned in the first phase of this project, was too small, and now serves as a children’s pool.

The lake is equipped with three flat-bottomed boats. On the bank of the Drava

river a boathouse has been built, as well as three wooden camp houses just near the camp premises (glampings).

The aim of the investment was to complete and finalize the existing tourism infrastructure in the Radlje ob Dravi area. With this project we have provided high quality and complete tourist offer that meets the needs of local residents and tourists, which increasingly makes Radlje ob Dravi municipality an attractive tourist destination.

The execution of works for the second phase was partially financed by the European Union from the European Regional Development Fund for Strengthening Regional Development Potentials 2007–2013, development priority “Development of Regions”, the priority guidelines of the “Regional Development Programmes”.

The investment was fully completed in September 2014

The Radlje ob Dravi water park boasts with the first natural bathing lakes in Slovenia. Nature helps us to maintain balance of the bathing lakes, and to establish biological self-defence mechanism. The dimensions of the bathing lakes are approximately 3,300 m<sup>2</sup> of water surfaces and 5,500 m<sup>2</sup> of maintained surrounding areas.

In the swimming part of the bathing lakes, there is a thick foil on the bottom where suction and cleaning is performed. The non-swimmer area is gravelled over the foil. With this measure, the effect of a real beach is achieved. In places, where the plants grow, the soil substrate was used. The entire bathing lake has been closed in the foil system, where water quality is monitored,

therefore, the penetration of external water would destroy the water biotope. Bathing and swimming parts of the lake as well as the small lake for babies, beaches, walking areas as well as the natural parts with plants are intentionally separated.

Specialty of the bathing lake in comparison to other artificial lakes is a natural swimming area where the water quality is controlled in the same manner as in the public pools and baths. The most important factor is that the water quality is controlled without chlorine. The regeneration zone is planted with vegetation that cleans the water. Above the foil there is a non-nutritive substrate for plants (sandy loam, loamy sand), without which the plants would not have been able to grow.

Cleaning of floating particles from the water

surface as well as the flow through the entire natural swimming lake is provided with a suction device. All pumps are installed in the technical area at the premises. The system consists of the two filter pumps with a coarse filter. Water supply in the swimming pool is provided with the coarse filter pumps. All transported bathing water is pumped through the substrate filter. After the water passes through the filter, it is being collected in compensation container and discharged back into the natural pool with the two pumps.

**The aim of the natural pools is maintaining a natural balance in the bathing lake as well as establishing its biological self-defence mechanism. This means that the purity and quality of the water is maintained by natural systems and biological water treatment plant, so there are no chemicals added**



**to the water of the bathing lake. The bathing lake is included in the unspoiled natural environment, which is not adversely burdened by it. The water park is a natural environmentally friendly bathing oasis in the middle of a diverse natural environment. The bathing lake is surrounded with a natural coastal part of the Drava river with meadows, fields and woodlands, that create rich biodiversity of the area. Bathing lakes are therefore completely fused with the existing landscape type.**

**The environmental aspect of the bathing lake and the development of the entire site is based on the preservation of the environment, particularly in terms of maintaining the quality of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems.**

The current infrastructure is under the management of the Radlje ob Dravi Public Institution for Tourism, Culture, Sport and Youth, and together with Radlje ob Dravi Municipality operational maintenance service they keep the area clean and tidy, and perform minor repairs.

### **Third phase: 2015–2020.**

It refers to the expansion of playgrounds and play areas, shopping and catering services at the premises of the water park and campsite, enlargement of the parking zone and laying out a tree park. All these would be done in the context of complementing the existing camp facilities. In this years' Municipal Spatial Planning, the location of expansion area has already been categorized as a construction land. The expansion area covers the size of 56,809

m<sup>2</sup>, while there are also inactive regulated areas (meadows, trails, parks etc.). The establishment of river traffic between the local communities of Upper Drava Valley is being held simultaneously, especially the tourist rafting and motorized boats. With the proposed expansions and contents, the municipality will be given a new dimension, which will importantly affect the economic and social development of the environment – especially in the form of environmentally friendly sustainable development.

The access to the water park has been sufficiently regulated with the local road connection LC 347021, part of which is connected to the public road JP 846051. The distance from the centre of Radlje ob Dravi to the water park is 5 minutes by car. Access roads are well maintained.

Economic development of the area is based on maintaining economic capacities which not only generate income and facilitate economic growth, but also consider the ecological efficient economy. This is reflected in the rational use of natural resources (eg. water) and reducing the use of non-renewable resources.

Innovative, dynamic and open-minded community with a developed tourist offer, competitive attributes and knowledge-based economy can proudly boast with the first swimming pool of this kind in Slovenia. Radlje ob Dravi municipality can finally be placed on the map of renowned tourist spots.

**Abroad, awards for a good practice were received for the following bathing lakes:**

On November 4th 2011, the company Biotop GmbH awarded Mr Peter Petrich from Lower Austria with the ENERGY GLOBE award for their project “Living Pool”. The same practice was used for the natural bathing lake in the Radlje ob Dravi municipality.

**Web link:**

**[http://www.energyglobe.com/de\\_at/energy-globe-award/info-seiten-der-bundeslaender/niederoesterreich/](http://www.energyglobe.com/de_at/energy-globe-award/info-seiten-der-bundeslaender/niederoesterreich/)**





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