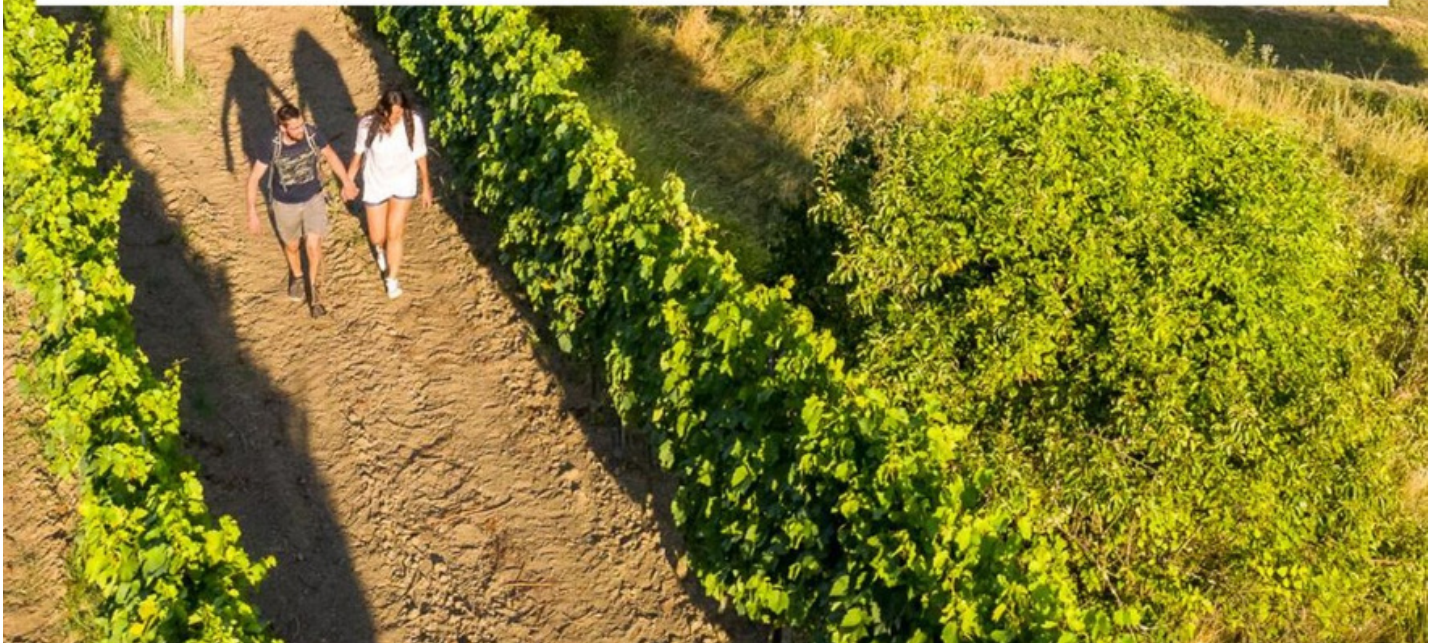


GREEN MILESTONES ON THE DESTINATION OF NOVA GORICA AND VIPAVA VALLEY SINCE 2020

**Sustainability report from
the Municipality of Ajdovščina**



The Institute for Tourism of Nova Gorica and Vipava Valley, founded by the Municipality of Nova Gorica, Municipality of Ajdovščina and Municipality of Renče-Vogrsko started operating in 2020. All the three municipalities have been included in the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism:

- City Municipality of Nova Gorica (MONG): Slovenia Green Gold (since 2015)
- Municipality of Ajdovščina (OA): Slovenia Green Silver (since 2019)
- Municipality of Renče-Vogrsko (ORV): Slovenia Green Bronze (since 2021)



Activities of the Institute for Tourism of Nova Gorica and Vipava Valley:

- The Institute signs commitments: **LESS plastics, MORE sustainability** and **Green and Healthy Office**.

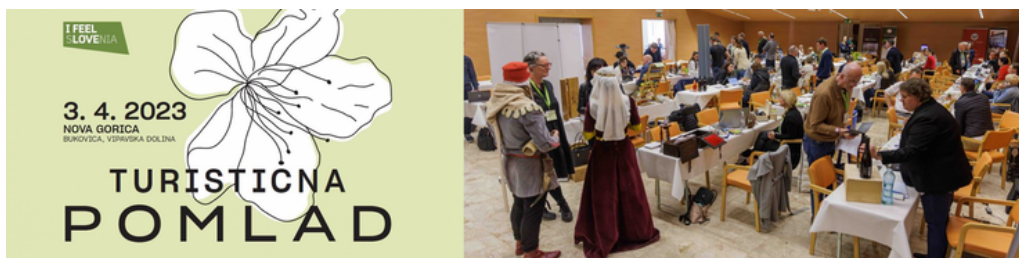


- Increasing visibility of the Vipava Valley – systematic advertising, management of the official online website www.vipavskadolina.si and social networks, welcoming of journalists, presentations at fairs and exchanges, reporting to media, etc. Creation of new campaigns that promote genuine experience throughout the year: Bike&Taste in the Paradise Valley, Paradise Valley for Families, Dream of Heavenly Flavours and Secrets of the Paradise Valley.
- New **Green Guide**, with green and sustainable contents for visitors.



- Creation of the online application **Vipava Valley Outdoor** with hiking, bike and motorcycle routes.
- **Digitalization of four units of cultural heritage**: the Roman fortress Castra in Ajdovščina, the Solkan Bridge in Solkan, a medieval castle in Vipavski križ, the Rihemberk Castle in Branik and the development of new products.
- New **shops with souvenirs** in TIC Nova Gorica, TIC Ajdovščina and on Sabotin.
- A new website of local products and other products **Tržnica na borjaču** (“Courtyard market”), which was launched in 2021, has been listed among the Top 100 Green Destinations.
- Creation of the online **Calendar of local events – Where and when?** Free-of-charge advertising of events on the location.
- Tourism development and marketing **strategy** of the destinations Nova Gorica and Vipava Valley is in the final phase.

- What is new in the offer?
 - Sabotin Visitor Centre – Peace Park,
 - New reception and interpretation centre of the Rihemberk Castle,
 - Vinišče Open-Air Museum and Field Hospital Museum in Renče.
- Taking part at the activities of the upcoming European Capital of Culture: **GO! 2025**.
- Institute for Tourism organized new annual tourism events:
 - **Tourism spring** (tourism stakeholders)
 - **Jump into the Paradise Valley** (journalists)
 - **Green Day of Slovenian Tourism** (tourism service providers)
 - Taking part in organization of **large sporting events**: Giro d'Italia, Tour of Slovenia, Ultra trail Vipava Valley, etc.



- Establishment of the Nova Gorica **Centre for Sustainable Mobility** (managed by the Institute for Tourism) for:
 - the slogan selected on a tender: »Green = my choice«,
 - European Mobility Week,
 - strengthening sustainable ways of travelling,
 - Nova Gorica tourism prospect – walking along the history of a young town,
 - Signposts in the city.
- Number of **places for bike rental**:
 - Nova Gorica: from 4 towns in 2019 to 14 in 2023.
 - Ajdovščina: from 2 in 2019 to 3 in 2023.
- Successful tourism-service providers:
 - The number of new certified Slovenia Green tourism-service providers has increased since 2019: Nova Gorica: from 2 to 6 certified accommodation providers and from 0 to 2 certified caterers; Ajdovščina: 1 new certified travel agency in 2021; Renče-Vogrsko: 1 new certified accommodation provider
 - Numerous awards to the tourism-service providers: Michelin stars, Decanter, Gault&Millau, ...
 - Tourism products, such as TOP experiences, on the portal Vipavskadolina.si
- Cooperation with the tourism-service providers via new e-mail address **top-doizivetja@vipavskadolina.si** and a number of trainings and cooperation with the tourism-service providers.
- **Overnight** stays in 2022 (219,137 overnight stays) approached the numbers achieved in 2019 (247,047 overnight stays). Length of stay: 2 days. In 2022, there were 80 % of arrivals to the destination in 8 months (MONG: 9 months; OA: 7 months; ORV: -).

THE MUNICIPALITY OF AJDOVŠČINA

IRRIGATION SYSTEM: In 2022, we started establishing an irrigation system for agricultural land, which will be completed by 2028. The irrigated areas cover approximately 1300 hectares.

"CYCLING NETWORK IN THE COUNTRYSIDE": The partnership of eleven Local Action Groups from all over Slovenia successfully applied for funding from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development through a grant provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Food. In the area of the LAS Vipava Valley (Local Action Group), the Municipality of Ajdovščina also joined the project as an investor, installing three charging stations for electric bicycles and establishing automated bicycle rental services. Each station has ten docking points, and currently, there are 13 bicycles available. By introducing the e-bike rental system, we promote the reduction of car usage, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, and improve air quality. There are also **two service racks for bicycles** in the city.

CYCLING ROUTES: The municipality of Ajdovščina has improved the infrastructure dedicated to soft mobility in recent years. A significant part of the city center has become a pedestrian zone, and we have obtained the first cycling paths with the prospect of soon developing them into a cycling network that extends beyond the city center. This will enable residents from surrounding areas to have easier and safer bicycle transportation to the city center. The project of constructing cycling paths and sidewalks throughout the city of Ajdovščina was divided into four sections, and concurrently with the construction of new traffic surfaces, the municipality also organized the communal infrastructure beneath the road. Wider cycling paths separated from the roadway ensure safe cycling and, in turn, promote cycling among a larger percentage of the population, while broader sidewalks and greenery contribute to the preference for walking for everyday errands. The cycling paths are not only established within the city of Ajdovščina but also connect to the neighboring village of Lokavec.



GREEN AJDOVŠČINA: The project task "Greening of Public Spaces in Ajdovščina and its Surroundings" brings the renovation of existing and establishment of new green areas in the town and its rural surroundings. The funding for the revitalization of the green spaces in our municipality comes from a donation of one million euros by Ivo and Taja Boscarol, dedicated to the general social benefit of providing a green and health-friendly living environment. The task covers not only the town of Ajdovščina but also other locations within the municipality. The greening project, implemented by the Municipality of Ajdovščina with the help of donated funds, is already becoming a good practice example. It was presented at the "Get to Know My Good Practice, Let's Green the Cities" conference held in Krško at the beginning of June, organized by the Institute for Spatial Policies and the Association of Slovenian Municipalities.

"GREEN WINDBREAK BELTS": In 2020, the Municipality of Ajdovščina planted a pilot demonstration windbreak belt measuring 300 meters in length and 5 meters in width with the aim of protecting the soil from the bora wind and establishing greater resilience to climate change. For the project "Planting New Green Windbreak Belts in the Vipava Valley," planned from 2022 onwards, we have obtained support from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Food of the Republic of Slovenia.

RENOVATED MARKETPLACE: In 2022, the renovated Ajdovščina marketplace was inaugurated, featuring 6 indoor sales stalls, providing a more vendor-friendly selling environment. As part of the renovation project, in addition to existing vendors, new suppliers also expressed interest in selling their products. With an expanded range of offerings, local residents have the opportunity to choose to purchase fresh locally grown produce.



DRINKING FOUNTAINS: In the municipality of Ajdovščina, over 30 drinking fountains have been installed in recent years as a measure to adapt to climate change and promote drinking water. They are connected to the public water supply, and their smooth operation is taken care of by the Ajdovščina Public Utility and Housing Company (Komunalno stanovanjska družba Ajdovščina).

TRAIL ALONG THE VIPAVA RIVER – MEASURES FOR THE CONSERVATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE STATUS OF ENDANGERED ANIMAL SPECIES AND HABITATS IN THE VIPAVA VALLEY: The City Municipality of Nova Gorica took part in the VIPava project – Measures for the conservation and improvement of the status of endangered animal species and habitats in Vipava Valley as one of the municipalities along the Vipava River. A new tourist-recreational nature trail by the Vipava River was implemented, from its source to the mouth, as well as several nature protection measures were implemented along the river.

GARAGE: In 2021, a mentoring program was launched, offering young people the opportunity to acquire new skills. The workspace provides various tools for manual and machine production of goods, along with expert mentorship. The project aims to facilitate intergenerational transfer of knowledge and skills. The key focus of the project is fostering creative entrepreneurial thinking and connecting young people with the local economy.

Vipava Valley. Uniquely different. All year round.



Zavod za turizem
Nova Gorica in
Vipavska dolina

Report prepared by: Institute for Tourism of Nova Gorica and Vipava Valley and the Municipality of Ajdovščina

Ajdovščina, 19. 6. 2023