



### ***The Bee path***

The Bee path was designed and opened in 2015. Path was created as the City of Ljubljana is aware of the importance of pollinators for the sustainability of our city. We designed it as a path along specific content, where visitors learn about the importance of bees for our survival, for our food security and the importance of honey in our daily diet as well as the heritage of beekeeping in the area of the city. As much as two-thirds of the total surface area of the City of Ljubljana is so-called rural areas in which 826 farms operate and the city puts great emphasis on self-sustainability. By doing so, it tries to ensure food sovereignty, unburdens the environment with short food supply chains while providing food security. The route involves various stakeholders from educational and cultural institutions, to institutions related to health, business companies, NGOs and, of course, beekeepers. Members of Bee path connect within each other, and build new successful stories. Concept of Beekeeping path is designed to cover very possible level – from education of young, do education of beekeepers, connection of cultural and natural heritage, promotion on different public events (Honey day), where citizens get to know bees, their products and their importance for our existence. The City of Ljubljana is firmly linked to bee-keeping, around 300 beekeepers maintain more than 4,500 beehives housing as many as 180 million bees. In the Strategy for Rural Development of the City of Ljubljana (2014-2020) the quality of agriculture and forestry goods, with the aim of self-sufficiency, is one of the important goals which should be achieved with increasing of beekeeping in rural and urban areas. There is a support system for bees and recommendations for all residents that want to keep bees in urban areas. The city administration and the Ljubljana Tourist Board had created tourist bee-keeping education trail that connects the main locations of Ljubljana's bee-keepers. Numerous promotion actions and presentations create bridges of understanding between beekeepers and citizens. By co-financing bee associations in Ljubljana the level of professional competence of bee keepers has risen. Bee path is also a good practice in the cities circular economy. All the partners use ecological and reusable materials. We are upgrading the content also with the story of wild pollinators and building environment friendly beehive with green roof and wood construction. The main focus on Bee paths is on the youngest. All Beekeepers Associations have beekeeping clubs in schools or at home. Here, the children learn about the importance of bees for our survival, develop a working attitude, socialize and learn about the importance of honey for our health. Special attention is given also to the elderly. We carry out various educational activities, field trips and lectures, where experts talk about the importance of honey and bee products, and products for their health. All the activities on the Bee paths (promotion, Honey day, events, training, networking, collaboration...) are a small part of the efforts of the Beekeepers Association of Slovenia on its way to proclaim the 20<sup>th</sup> May the World Day of bees by the UN.

Because of the good results within the Bee path project, the Slovenian Beekeepers' Association announced Ljubljana a second and third *The most friendly municipality for the Bees* in the year 2015 and 2016. Everybody follows the *Code of Good Beekeeping Practice* that Slovenian Beekeepers Association and veterinaries prescribed. Grounds for the Bee path establishment are adopted in the Strategy for Rural development of the City of Ljubljana (2014-2020). Since the year 2015 only Bee

path used cca. 14.000,00 EUR of city money. All the partners invested hundreds of hours of their free time (promotional events, meetings, development activities...) and other resources.

Program still runs and will continue to run also in the next programing period. City set up the long-term program, together with financing it. Bee path has more and more partners each year. It started with 12 partners, now there are 31. They create networks and together they build new stories.