

OUTPUT T2.3

Learning Interaction

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Topic

Roman festival

1. Objective/s

Despite the immense length of the Danube Limes of over 2800 km, which in Roman times was spanned by a dense network of forts and watchtowers, this northern frontier of the Roman Empire is today almost completely forgotten. While Hadrian's Wall is known far beyond the borders of Great Britain by the public, due to a monument preservation and tourism concept built over decades, larger parts of the Danube Limes are still slumbering. At the same time, the stages of development of the respective Limes sections in the different countries are at different levels of visibility. Several million people live along the Austrian Danube Limes and most of them are not aware of the cultural and historical heritage they pass by every day and build their history and identity on. Nevertheless, the development of the Austrian Danube Limes, which mainly includes the conservation, visualization, and tourist accessibility of the archaeological monuments, has been pursued for several decades already. The best-known Roman site in Austria, Carnuntum, was recently joined by sites in Upper Austria, carefully restored to be presented to the public – Enns and Oberranna are to be cited as examples.

Sites that not yet feature so prominently in the Austrian Limes section hold huge potential for the future and can easily be put centre stage and attract lots of visitors on a single day with re-living parts of its Roman history and presenting not only the archaeological remains, but also “Romans” to talk to and to engage with. Due to its central location, already existing larger infrastructure and outstanding preservation of Roman building structures, the former fort location Tulln in Lower Austria is particularly suitable for a further visualization of the Danube Limes.

The main objective of a Roman festival is to raise awareness, in this case on

- the Roman Danube Limes as a whole, including the topic of UNESCO World Heritage; since 2021 the Austrian sites are part of the UNESCO World Heritage “Frontiers of the Roman Empire” and from Hungary onwards downstream Roman sites in the individual countries are on the tentative list.
- Roman history and archaeological remains; especially in Tulln and its vicinity Roman remains are still standing high above ground, up to four storeys.
- the potential the Roman heritage and remains hold for sustainable and green tourism development.
- the importance of cultural heritage protection and caretaking.

2. Target Groups

The main target group of a Roman festival was identified as the general public. Within this group individual sub-groups can be readily identified and addressed. With visits and guided tours in the Roman museum diverse interests from young to old visitors can be catered for, and the broad possibilities of living history and re-enactment appeal to most of the visitors and

passers by of such festivals. With “Romans” to talk to and to engage with and the Living Danube Limes replica of a lusoria-type Roman Danube vessel, the visitors can be involved in thematic areas of experimental archaeology as well. Finally, a handicraft activity for children binds not only the little ones but also the family. Practicing Roman formations and smaller combat exercises such as the Roman "testudo" allows the involvement of whole groups of small children or class groups. In addition, (adventure) tours for all age groups can also appeal to very different target groups.

The planning process of such a festival targets additional groups. Higher education for example is destined to play a role in conceptualization as well as preparation and attendance. On the one hand, the event can also be seen as a kind of experiment during which the reactions and accessibility of the audience are assessed and evaluated, and lessons learned for future events, especially when it comes to establishing such festivals within future tourism concepts. But this target group can also become visitors themselves and experience the event on a different, educationally more demanding level.

For the success of such an event, public authorities (from local to national), NGOs, interest groups and international organizations can and must be involved and invited. This serves to increase the visibility of the event and offers other cities and municipalities the opportunity to consider similar events for their localities as well and explore and develop synergies.

Small and medium enterprises and service providers who are included into the planning and catering for the event can identify future market options when it comes to developing and implementing sustainable, local and green catering ideas for such events, based on Roman traditions and recipes as well as handicraft.

3. General Schedule

To give the visitors space to walk and spend time engaging with Romans and to get an idea of the size of the Roman settlement in modern Tulln, the festival is spread out both geographically as well as regarding time. Different activities and presentations take place at different times, to allow the visitors to pick certain ones or to join for all of them, depending on their interest and time available.

The activities also follow different topics and approaches – from hands-on to conventional museum tours:

- Visit to the Danuvina Alacris, the lusoria-type replica ship
- Romans tell stories – hands-on walks through Roman Tulln with dressed up Roman tour guides, who give information on the daily live in a Roman city and engage with the questions of the public
- Romans travel – workshop for families, with a focus on travel also by waterways, thus linking the Danube and the reconstructed Roman ship to the festival on land
- Romans discover – guided tours in the Roman Museum, with guides dressed in Roman fashion
- Information booth on project, to give academic and scientific input on both history and archaeology as well as the project aims in general

- Re-enactment performances by Roman soldiers and travelling salesmen, thus adding the military part to the townspeople from the hands-on walk through Roman Tulln. Special care should be taken to represent the whole time of Roman presence on the Limes if the festival is not staged for a specific century.
- Romans play – station theatre for young and old visitors.
- Catering in Roman tower

4. Implementation Approach

For such an event there are different possibilities and methods which can be followed and ideally interlink and build on each other. They are briefly explained based on the situation in Tulln.

Archaeological presentation

The Roman Museum in Tulln is the perfect place to present the archaeological material to a wide audience and to put them in direct contact with the objects. This can be rounded off by active guided tours in which the visitor is shown not only the original object but also reconstructions and replicas and is invited to engage with the guides dressed as Romans and the objects themselves, by touching and putting them on.

Territorial presentation and Roman remains

In addition to the original archaeological finds, which are in the museum, the wider area of the former Roman Tulln awaits with some legacies that still bear impressive witness to the former fort. These include the so-called Roman Tower or Salt Tower (formerly part of the fort wall) and the eastern fort gate, which can still be seen to a great extent today. These sites can still today impressively demonstrate the monumentality of such facilities to every visitor and allow a much better idea of how to imagine the Roman past along the Limes. It is paramount to include whatever remains of Roman history are visible into the festival.

Living History and replica of objects

The presentation of the museum and the outdoor remains can be rounded off with various living history groups, which benefit from being located near Roman remains. It is important to integrate living history into the overall context of the site. This includes, in the context of the larger late antique buildings, elements like the Roman Tower as well as the integration of the project's replica of a late antique patrol boat. It is therefore very clear that a quality event is needed that does justice to the handling of such a complex topic.

Workshop approaches

Workshops offer the possibility to involve the visitors actively. In addition to engaging a wide range of audiences, the workshops can serve to increase engagement with children and entire

families, depending on the topics chosen. The workshops envisaged for the festival in Tulln are connected to Romans travelling on the water and the reconstructed Danube ship.

5. Learning Approach

5.1. Knowledge transferred

The knowledge transferred to the visitors of all age can be summarised in three main bullets:

- The everyday live of Romans in a town on the Danube Limes, thus the frontier of the Roman Empire. From travelling salesman and military to the civilian inhabitants of the Roman cities along the Limes.
- How Roman materials feel like if touched and worn; one take away of the visitors was that in certain spheres of everyday live, the Roman lives were not so very much different from what we know today – they showed themselves impressed by the high-quality of Roman live style possible on the frontiers.
- Roman shipping on the Danube and the Danube as highway of antiquity.

6. Case Study: Roman Festival Event Tulln an der Donau

6.1. Contribution to Project Objectives

The results of the respective Living Danube Limes event contribute to the following project general incentives:

- Laying of foundations for the creation of a European Cultural Route connecting the whole Danube Region; connecting the region and helping to address challenges of public and political disinterest in the cultural, economic and touristic potential of Roman heritage sites along the Danube.
- Establishing the ground on which a sustainable branding of the entire region as coordinated tourist destination with eco-friendly solutions and offers can be developed.
- Creating museum and visitor site clusters in which the visualisation of the entire Danube Limes can be coordinated between the museums and sites; becoming the interface with the public and helping to make the Danube Limes Region a more visible and attractive tourist destination.
- Drawing attention to the status of UNESCO World Heritage by a) creating public attention and political support of investment measures in the preservation and presentation of the rich Roman heritage, b) becoming integral part of the future Danube Limes Cultural Route and c) enhancing the understanding and awareness of a connected Danube Region.

6.2. Recapitulation of Organisers

It was highly successful to organise numerous activities within the boundaries of the Roman city Comagena (modern Tulln). This involved an active engagement of the visitors with the programme and the “Romans” dispersed all over the city. It also fostered a better understanding of the size of the Roman town.

Besides the replica ship the highlight were the Roman guides placed all over Tulln with whom the visitors could directly engage and be told their stories from the ancient, everyday city live.

The arrival of the Danuvina Alacris on the eve of the festival was met with strong rainfall, which shortened the public welcome ceremony and limited the number of visitors. There was no plan B for bad weather, since the arrival of the ship could not depend on the weather. For the main festival a plan B for bad weather existed, though that would have hampered the dispersion of the set up all over the ancient town.

Huge interest was displayed regarding the reconstructed Roman ship. With the masses of visitors on one day (more than 1,000) it would not have been possible to organise rowing tours for the public, but this can be registered as lesson learned that rowing tours, in different length versions, can act as centre piece for future festivals, or as prelude / aftermath to festivals.

6.3. Annex A: Event Report of Respective Living Danube Limes Event

Title of the living history event:

Roman festival Tulln

Type of living history and re-enactment activities:

The event included living history and re-enactment performances, Roman city tours with guides dressed in Roman fashion as well as Roman reenactors placed at several spots throughout the city telling their stories to the people walking by and engaging them. The whole period of Roman presence was spanned with a living history group representing camp life from Roman imperial times (camp kitchen, training, handicrafts, long-range weapons) and a late Roman group presenting travelling salesmen, accompanying Roman soldiers on their campaigns.

Date of event:

30th and 31st of July, 2022

- Visit to the Danuvina Alacris
- Romans tell stories – hands-on tours
- Romans travel – workshop

- Romans discover – guided tours in the Roman Museum
- Information booth on project
- Re-enactment performances
- Romans play – station theatre
- Catering in Roman tower

Venue of event:

The event was spread across the town of Tulln and was held at the following locations:

- Römermuseum Tulln
Marc Aurel-Park 1b
3430 Tulln
- Guest harbour Tulln
- Catering by the at the Roman tower
- Several places along the promenade walk in Tulln along the Danube (cycling and walking lanes) on which Romans engaged with visitors and told them their stories.

Participating partners:

- DUK
- PLUS
- Municipality Tulln

Description of the event:

The main event took place on July 31st, the arrival of the ship on July 30st was a prelude to the main event. The municipality of Tulln organized a welcome with a buffet for visitors and music welcoming the ship and its crew. In the same week an Austrian-Ukrainian children's camp took place in Tulln and the children came on board the Danuvina Alacris for the last few kilometres before Tulln and joined the reception – they had also prepared local delicacies for the Roman rowers on the Danuvina Alacris.

The main event took place at several places in Tulln. Between the two main points, the Roman Museum in Tulln and the guest harbour, in which the Danuvina Alacris was anchored, Roman history was conveyed at the so-called salt tower (a fully upright standing Roman tower of the city wall), the main square and a handful of places spread evenly along the promenade walk along the Danube, at which guides dressed as Romans told their stories from Roman Comagena (Tulln).

In the format of station theatre, the facilitators slipped into the role of Roman archetypes. An amusing but scientifically based story vividly demonstrated the Roman era to guests through individual scenes. In an entertaining way, visitors and walkers were told interesting facts about past times in just a few minutes using display objects and Roman replicas (3 possible topics per station, depending on visitor interest). This method aimed to reach both explicitly travelled and spontaneous visitors, to arouse historical interest and to increase the dissemination of the project and the awareness of Roman excavation sites and museums in the best possible way.

Families and adults were able to immerse themselves in the world of the Roman navy in a two-hour workshop entitled "Naval Workshop - Roman Travel". The program included an exclusive visit to the Danuvina Alacris and the construction of their own ship model.

The Danuvina Alacris was a station in her own right and was presented to all visitors during guided tours throughout the day and could be visited. DUK and PLUS presented the project on and immediately adjacent to the Danuvina Alacris, also with Roman clothes and shoes for visitors to touch and put on, to enable them to get a better idea of the clothing Roman soldiers and people in general wore.

A living history group also presented Roman life and showed Roman weapon demonstrations and the camp life of the Roman legionaries. There replicas dated to imperial times. This was important, since together with the Danuvina Alacris and a traveling salesman display with a horse carriage, both dating to late antiquity, the whole period of Roman presence along the Danube and especially Tulln was represented.

Guided tours in the Roman Museum Tulln were offered the whole day long; the guides were dressed in Roman dress as well, representing a Roman soldier and a Roman woman, thus giving

the visitors not only the usual museum facts, but also transporting them back in time with their appearance.

Outreach

Number of participants in total:

The visitors to the Roman Museum were counted at the entrance, this count gives the minimum number of visitors on that day and amounts to 825 people. An educated estimation combined with the handing out of the Living Danube Limes buttons to visitors at the Danuvina Alacris and the information booth of DUK and PLUS leads to the final minimum number of participants on that day of 1000.



Programme and impressions



PROGRAMM

- **„DANUVINA ALACRIS“** – Besichtigung des authentisch römischen Patrouillenschiffs
10-18 UHR | GÄSTEHAFEN
- **RÖMER:INNEN ERZÄHLEN** – Hands-On-Führungen behandeln an vier Standorten spannende Themen aus dem römischen Alltag.
10-13 UHR & 14-17 UHR | DONAULÄNDE
- **RÖMER:INNEN REISEN** – zweistündiger Workshop zur römischen Marine für Erwachsene und Familien mit Bau eines Schiffsmodells. Beschränkte Teilnehmer:innenanzahl, Anmeldung unter 02272/690-189 erbeten.
11 UHR & 15 UHR | STADTMUSEUM TULLN
- **RÖMER:INNEN ENTDECKEN** – freier Eintritt im Stadtmuseum Tulln/Römermuseum, Führungen nach Wunsch und Interesse
10-17 UHR | STADTMUSEUM TULLN
- **INFOSTAND** der Universität für Weiterbildung Krems und der Paris Lodron Universität Salzburg über das Projekt „Living Danube Limes“ und die Reise der „Danuvina Alacris“
10-18 UHR | NÄHE GÄSTEHAFEN
- **LEGIO XIII** – Die römische Reenactment-Gruppe zeigt das Lagerleben der Legionäre mit Training, Handwerk, dem Umgang mit Fernwaffen und der Lagerküche. Außerdem mit dabei ein spät-römisches Fuhrwerk mit Pferden.
10-18 UHR | DONAULÄNDE
- **RÖMER:INNEN SPIELEN** – Ein kurzweiliges Stationentheater entführt in die römische Vergangenheit.
19-20 UHR | STADTMUSEUM TULLN
- **SPEIS & TRANK** – Verpflegung durch die Studentenverbindung K.Ö.St.V. Comagena Tulln
MITTAG | RÖMERTURM

Bei Schlechtwetter finden alle Aktivitäten (außer der Schiffsbesichtigung, dem Workshop und den Führungen im Stadtmuseum Tulln) im **Atrium des Minoritenklosters (Rathaus)** statt.





Ukrainian children presenting local delicacies to the arriving Romans



Visitors at Danuvina Alacris and information booth on project



Visitors at the Danuvina Alacris



Re-enactment group



Travelling salesmen group



Romans posing with Nibelungs, who also play a prominent role in the history of Tulln