
OUTPUT 3.4.1



Concept of improved access and visibility of the archaeological sites—

Dr. Tamás Fejérdy
National Office of Cultural Heritage



EUROPEAN UNION
EUROPEAN REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT FUND



1CE079P4 / Danube Limes - UNESCO World Heritage Project
"This project is implemented within the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme co-financed by the ERDF"



The fundamental principles of the presentation conception for the Hungarian section of the Roman Limes – Ripa Pannonica

The Limes is split up by the current international borders into major sections, which together will comprise the entire serial World Heritage site. These sometimes have significantly differing characteristics due to their geographical and other attributes, and therefore it is indeed justified and necessary to create appropriate solutions for the given sections in relation to their presentation, for example.

The essential characteristic of Limes sections along rivers is that the system of defense was not in a physical sense continuous, or connected in the manner of a linear defensive system such as a wall or palisade, etc. In accordance with this, one of the greatest challenges concerning its presentation is to have the viewer perceive, or at least interpret the defensive system as an integral part of a larger whole when there are only a few concrete fragments of some of its elements. In this regard the presentation conception must attempt to make each portion/element precisely and clearly identifiable as to where it is set in connection to the whole, what links it has (had) to other parts and what role it played. All of this can and must be worked out through a unified system of information and orientation (including the use of nomenclature, pictograms and the overall design).

Particularly large difficulties in perceiving its relationships can be caused by the fragmentary nature and insignificant scale of the remains found at certain defensive elements. Despite this, or in the interest of compensating for this, efforts must be made not to emphasize an enclosed, self-contained nature in the presentation of exhibited sections, but instead just the opposite, always to point out their interconnectedness. In this regard the watch towers play a particular role as emphasized points in the line of the Limes as it stretches along the Danube. A consideration and goal for their presentation is to create a link with the exhibits of its neighboring watch towers by at least indicating their direction and distance.

The opportunities for their presentation are influenced to a great extent by their urban or rural locations, the development or agricultural activities around them and the conditions determined by their accessibility. The management plan will logically deal with developing solutions that fit the characteristics of certain types and categories of locations through the assertion of the considerations related to their ability to be understood, interpreted and placed within the greater whole as regards the essence of the presentation conception.

Those elements and components of the Hungarian section of the Limes that have been verified to exist and are contained in the core area of the World Heritage site will be judged as to whether, in addition to their preservation and management, they can and should be exhibited. The decisive factor for this judgment will be the immediate conditions of the setting of the given element, as well as the role they play in achieving a “threshold of integrity” in the authentic depiction of the Limes.

Their presentation, while not completely the same as their accessibility and availability to visitors, is still closely linked with them. In accordance with this, it is contained within the conceptual considerations for presentation that they be organized in (logical) sections. Individual elements that fall within the territory of present-day towns and/or elements that were linked in the former system of defenses can and should be organized into these kinds of presentation sections.

The physical/visual conception for presentation fundamentally rests on the conservation of the surviving (and excavated) remains. At the same time, conservation in and of itself may demand (for example to ensure stability) some supplementation (additional structures, building up of walls, etc.). In addition to the minimal employment of supplementation, the complexity and large extent of the Limes defensive system does not exclude the possibility that authentic reconstructive exhibits of an instructional nature appear at certain sections where an intervention of this character would not damage the existing, original elements in any way. An example of this that already exists is the gate structure of Lussonium.

The presentation of one of the most important parts of the system of defenses, the Limes road network, represents a serious challenge. This is due to its great length, as well as to the fact that in most sections it has severely deteriorated and is in a poor physical condition and state of conservation. The trace of the Limes road and its relationship with our own network of roads in itself represents an outstanding historic asset. Therefore, efforts must be made in its presentation to point out the differences and similarities, and in conjunction with this to provide access to as many portions of the Limes road as possible and to as long sections as possible, even if very little of the former structure of the road can be discerned.

All in all, the presentation must not fundamentally strive towards visual spectacle, but towards the perception, understanding and evocation of the system comprised by the surviving elements. Particular care must also be taken in assuring that the structures to be

built in connection with making the site available to visitors play a genuinely supportive role, while not pushing the actual existing elements of the Limes into the background or disturbing their appearance.

**This operation is implemented through the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme
and co-financed by the ERDF**

