

THE DANUBE LIMES PROJECT

The Central Europe Project “Danube Limes – UNESCO World Heritage”

In 2007 the Slovakian and Hungarian Ministries of Culture made final decisions to nominate their sections of the Danube Limes for World Heritage status. They gave authority to the relevant governmental authorities to start and co-ordinate the preparatory work for the UNESCO application(s). This project is supported by the European Territorial Cooperation in the framework of the Central Europe Programme financed by the European Regional Development Fund with an overall budget of 2.05 million Euros. Both countries have already started their preparatory work and put their monuments on the national "Tentative Lists for inscription on the UNESCO List". The project consortium, which is lead by the Hungarian monument preservation authority (KÖH – Kulturális Örökségvédelmi Hivatal) includes partners from Slovakia, Austria, Germany and Poland.



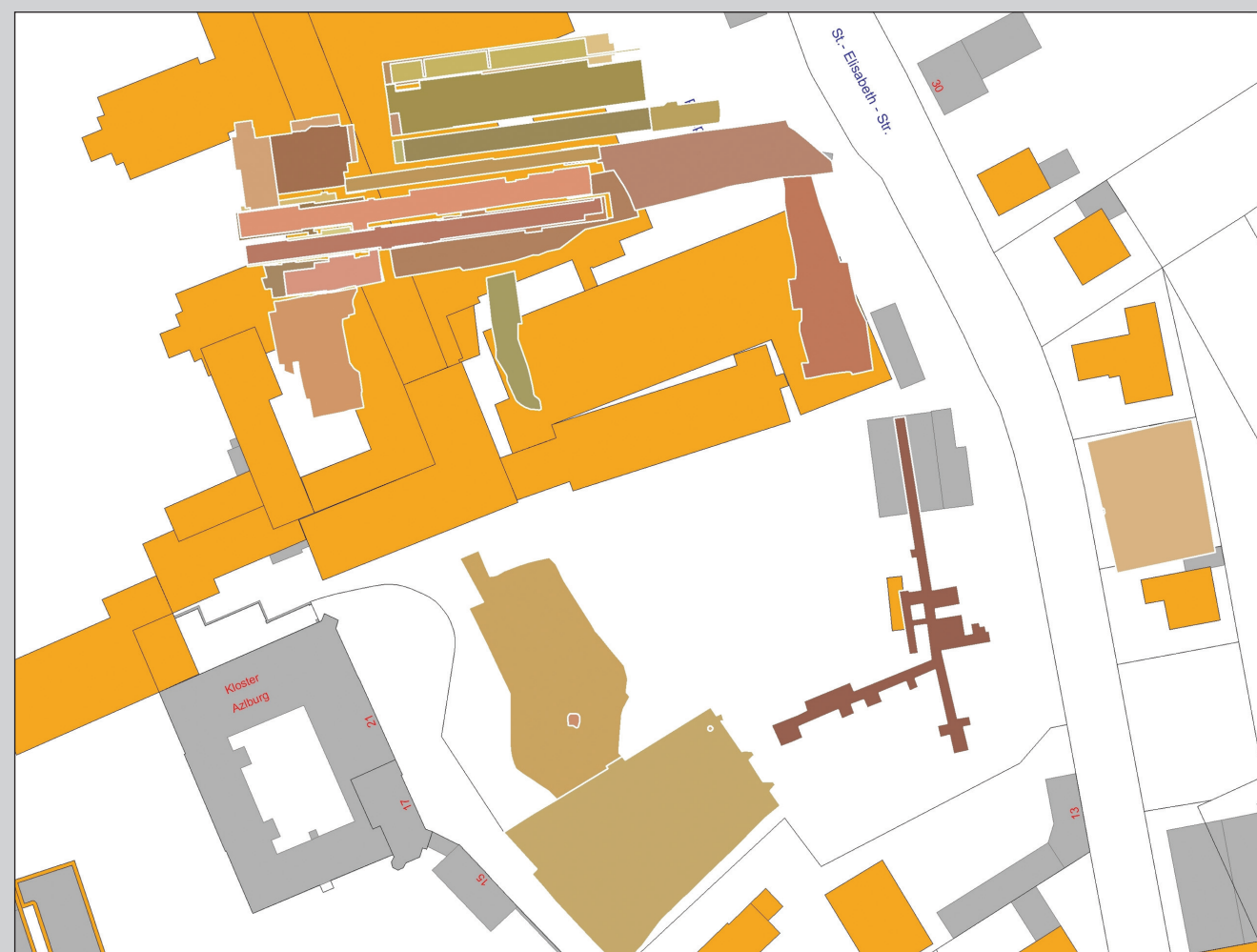
The massive late Roman defensive towers at Mautern (Austria) survived very well into the present times because they were part of the medieval fortification system (Photo: Boundary Productions, Bleiberg)



Next to the United Kingdom and Germany already five more countries along the river Danube have indicated the intention to nominate their sections for the UNESCO inscription (Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia and Romania) (Copyright: CE Projekt Danube Limes; edited by Kurt Schaller)



The southern gate of the legionary fortress at Aquincum has been preserved in a densely populated area of the modern city of Budapest (Photo: Zsolt Visy, Pécs)



The Cadastre project Straubing: sample area with positive (various colours, excavations) and negative results (yellow and grey, buildings, cellars) (Copyright: Stadt Straubing, Bayer, Landesamt f. Denkmalpflege, J. Valenta)

The challenge of protection and preservation

The nature of river frontiers promoted the development of urbanization particularly in the very centre of Europe. This is a major problem, when it comes to record and protect the monuments. Whereas only 8% of the Upper German-Raetian Limes WHS lies in settled areas (and this is not too far to the percentage recorded on Hadrian's Wall or the Antonine Wall), many segments of the river lines are situated in intensively used (urban) areas. Excavations of Roman remains are often undertaken in advance of building projects to extend the city suburbs or redevelop old inner cities. Many parts have already been destroyed and are lost for research. To protect and preserve those sites is equally problematic. A solution for the future lays in better prevention activities, such as the establishment of archaeological cadastres.

Promoting the Danube Limes as a prospective World Heritage Site

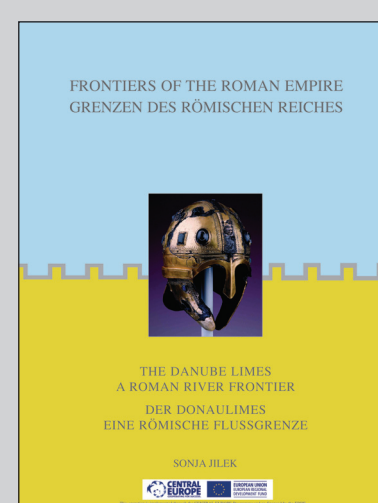
A journey along the Danube from Bavaria to the Black Sea demonstrates how the Roman empire guarded and maintained this border line, which played a crucial role in making and breaking emperors and ensuring Rome's survival for more than 500 years from its beginning under Augustus to its decline and fall amidst the barbarian invasions of the 5th and 6th century AD. A new booklet tracks those traces down concentrating on the preserved monuments and the impressive archaeological landscapes. The individual monuments, above and below ground, visible or non-visible, are often remarkable and deserve more generous attention. To raise awareness about the transnational monument(s) the project will inform the policy makers, the regional and local authorities administering and the population living within the distinctive archaeological areas by organising workshops and conferences, via media, events and exhibitions.



The Danube Limes as a potential World Heritage Site was presented and discussed at the “Donauforum 2009” in Linz on 29th June 2009. Participants: 1st row l. to r. Vice Chancellor a.D. Dr. Erhard Busek (SECI), Foreign Minister Gordan Jandroković (Croatia), EU Commissioner Prof. Danuta Hübner, Governor of Upper Austria Dr. Josef Pühringer, Foreign Minister Dr. Michael Spindelegger (Austria), Vice-Minister Olga Algayerova (Slovakia), President of the Landtag Baden-Württemberg Peter Straub, 2nd row r. to l. Regierungspräsident Heinz Grunwald (Bavaria), State Secretary Dr. József Czukor (Hungary), Assistance Minister Ambassador Milovan Bozinovic (Serbia), State Secretary Iulian Matache (Romania), Ambassador Dr. Johannes Eigner (Photo: Land Oberösterreich, Heinz Kraml, Linz)



Prof. Laszlo Borhy and Prof. Dr. Andreas Schwarz opening the exhibition “The frontier of Pannonia as a World Heritage Site” in Komaróm in July 2009 (Photo: Eva Kuttner, Leonding)



Cover of the new booklet “The Danube Limes, a Roman river frontier” (Copyright: CE Project “Danube Limes”)

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