



Celemantia – Limes Romanus knocking on UNESCO's door

Keywords: cultural heritage, cultural and creative tourism, art

The aim of the project: In recent years, local governments of Iža and Almásfüzitő have made serious efforts to nurse the history of the settlements. First steps of the investments were constructed in frame of a former project. The project aims to develop cultural and creative tourism by extending and developing the already existing interesting and interactive institutions in order to attract more tourists.

Partners: local government of Iža (lead partner) (Slovakia), local government of Almásfüzitő (Hungary)

Project implementation time: 01/01/2018-30/06/2021

Budget: 1 749 200.96 EUR (total)

Granted by: European Regional Development Fund (85%), national co-financing (10%), own contribution (5%)

Program: Interreg V-A Slovakia-Hungary Cooperation program (2014-2020)

Priority line/Specific objective: to increase the attractiveness of the cross border area

Context: Komárom and its area is inhabited from the oldest ages, and disposes of a very rich historical heritage: two Roman Legions were located here, Brigetio in Komárom (Hungary) and Azaum in Almásfüzitő (Hungary). The border of the former Roman Empire (called Limes), which defended the empire against barbarian invasions, run along this area. Ancient fortress, i.e. roman castellum of Celemantia is located on the left side of the Danube river, 4 km east from the entry of Váh into the Danube, in the field of Iža settlement in Slovakia. In ancient times, castellum of Celemantia was located opposite to the Brigetio Roman Legion; its functions included the defence of Brigetio and ensuring the crossing-place in the Danube river. Celemantia served as a starting point of the expeditions of the Roman army, while in time of peace, it controlled trade along the Danube river. Archeological excavations have been in progress since the beginning of the 20th century; in 2021, underwater archeologists were likely to discover the remains of 4 ancient bridge piers in the Danube river by Celemantia, using sonar technology. The findings are supposed to be the remains of a stone bridge between Brigetio and Kelemantia and are very unique, because archeologists have still nowhere discovered the remains of a bridge linking the conquered imperial areas with the Barbaricum (latter is located beyond the imperial border). Currently, a lot of questions relates to this theory, therefore, further divers are necessary to prove the assumptions. In recent years, local governments of Iža and Almásfüzitő have made serious efforts to revive and nurse their ancient history. Results of their common Interreg IIIA project (in 2013) are the establishment of Celemantia Roman and Ethnographic Museum in Iža (by rebuilding the former kindergarten building), as well as the establishment of Azaum Roman Camp in Almásfüzitő. Both settlements deem it important to strengthen the attachment of residents for their homeland, as well as to call the attention of both the local youth and tourists to the historical-archeological as well as to intellectual values of the Komarno-Komárom cross border area. This aim is strengthened by the publication of a touristic guide and a leaflet. Furthermore, connection possibility to EUROVELO 6 international bicycle road in Iža may attract more tourists.

Description: In recent years, local governments of Iža and Almásfüzitő have made serious efforts to revive and nurse their ancient history, as well as to use their cultural heritage in an interesting and interactive way. Common goal of the partner settlements was to widen their existing touristic establishments as well as to further develop the region's cultural and creative tourism and complete it with gastro tourism, in order to attract more tourists into the Komarno-Komárom cross border region. The two settlements, Iža (Slovakia) and

Almásfüzitő (Hungary) decided to cooperate tightly during the project implementation, in order to work out cost effective and sustainable solutions. Thanks to the common project implementation, based on this partnership, touristic offer of the Komarno-Komárom cross border region could be better harmonised, international competitiveness of this area could be increased, furthermore, the development of cross-border cooperations could also be further enhanced. Also project partners could realize remarkable advantages, e.g. cross-border friendships were formed, common cross border tourism development and marketing activities were implemented, possibilities opened for professional support, cooperation and consultation, common organisation of festivals ensuring survival of traditions as well as of gastronomy festivals were carried out. Furthermore, common sales strategies for tourists were developed in order to boost tourism in the cross border area, and a new, thematic touristic route was also developed. Project partners shared their knowledge with each other and also with the public. Next to the support of school history teaching, the project established the appreciation and visibility of the cultural heritage of Iža and Almásfüzitő, which have a key importance from the point of view of its preservation. This project provides a good example of the interesting and interactive usage of cultural heritage in cross-border context.

Results: As a result of the project, both participating settlements established new touristic places, which are eligible for dissemination, entertainment and active recreation, while they fit to the cross border region's historical, cultural and natural values, i.e. to the face of the area. In Iža (Slovakia), a brand new building (1136 m²) was added to Celemantia Roman and Ethnographic Museum in its courtyard, including 16 handicrafts workrooms (2 out of them barrier-free) and community spaces; in the atrium, open-air furnaces were set up in order to burn out ceramics. In the handicrafts workrooms, ancient roman professions are demonstrated and taught in summer camps organised for children. On the long run, continuous opening of community spaces and handicrafts workrooms is planned, however, longer opening hours arise additional costs. The solution could be that Celemantia Roman and Ethnographic Museum in Iža should be institutionalized in the way that it becomes a department of the Danube Region Museum in Komarno; this idea is supported by both museums. A 3D model of Celemantia was also constructed, and it has been exhibited in the museum. In Iža, two barbicans were set up at the eastern and western ends of the settlement, next to the main road. The eastern tower is located along the Eurovelo 6 international cycle road, so it can also attract bicycle tourists. Further developments are expected in Leányvár, 2 km from Iža, where the ruins of the roman castellum can be found: both the northern and the southern gates are planned to be reconstructed. The southern gate is expected to get a wooden construction, while in case of the northern gate, wall ruins are planned to build about one meter high, using ancient materials and technologies (stones from Süttő and free lime). In Almásfüzitő (Hungary), a playground for smaller children, labyrinth, interactive exhibition space, a building demonstrating roman houses with open kitchen, as well as parking places for tourist buses have been established. In 2021, a permanent exhibition of Azaum Roman Camp was opened. As a result of a more than 14 years long cooperation among the partner institutions of Germany, Austria and Slovakia, the Danube Limes – as part of it also Celemantia – was put down in the list of the UNESCO world heritage. The world heritage status can make Celemantia more attractive, it can boost tourism, and may attract more state support.

Success factors: The project aimed to widen the existing touristic establishments of Iža and Almásfüzitő, as well as to further develop the region's cultural and creative tourism. Based on this fact, a stable high level and high quality cross-border cooperation of the project partners, Iža and Almásfüzitő can be identified as first success factor. Results of the partners' former common project served as starting points of further developments, therefore, this project shows a good example of building relevant milestones upon each other consciously. Furthermore, the idea of interesting and interactive usage of the unique ancient roman cultural heritage of the two settlements can be regarded a success factor as well.

Limiting factors: In Almásfüzitő, remains of the roman camp are located under the industrial red mud storage, therefore, it is impossible to excavate them. In Iža, ownership of the land under the roman remains were not clear, and this fact made archeological work more complicated. Furthermore, first sinking of the underwater



archeologists was not successful because of low visibility and unclear water of the river after flood; they could identify objects only by touch; therefore, further sinking and research is necessary.

Applicability and upscaling: This project provides a good example of a long term, stable, high level and high quality partnership as well as of building relevant milestones upon each other consciously in case of a cultural heritage overreaching the border. Utilization of such a common cultural heritage motivates partners to connect and cooperate. The idea can be adopted and implemented in other areas being in a similar situation.

Other resources

Barbicans in Iža



Source: <https://www.deltakn.sk/szepul-az-izsai-leanyvar-a-vilagorokseg-resze-lett/>

Celemantia Roman and Ethnographic Museum in Iža



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Ruins of Celemantia in Leányvár

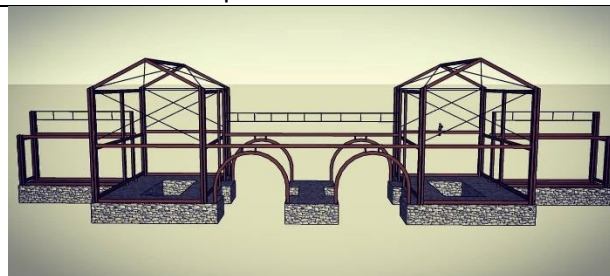






Source: own photos.

Southern Gate of Celemantia roman castellum:photo and reconstruction plan



Source: <https://www.deltakn.sk/szepul-az-izsai-leanyvar-a-vilagorokseg-resze-lett/>

Website:

<https://ma7.sk/tajaink/epul-es-szepul-az-izsai-leanyvar>

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