

Archaeological parks in urban areas as a tool for local, sustainable development

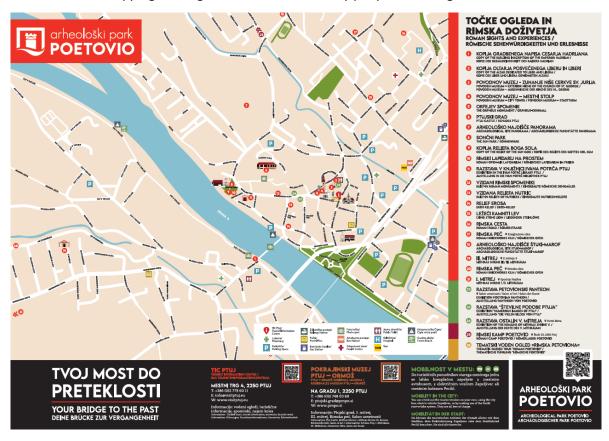
Scientific-research centre Bistra Ptuj (Danilo Čeh, Zvonka Lazar Borak, Nataša Mršek)

The city of Ptuj and other small and middle-sized towns are facing the same challenges – how to include the interpretation of archaeological heritage in a rapidly changing modern society, how to connect presentations of archaeological remains with other urban elements of the city, how to establish sustainable development and how to achieve an economically successful cultural, archaeological tourism.

The integral management of urban development and cultural heritage protection has contributed to local communities sustainability. Instead, economic stagnancy was noticed when cultural heritage protection would overrule urban development. Paradoxically, the loss of cultural values and identity is likely to happen when urban development is prioritized over cultural heritage protection.

Therefore, it is essential to place heritage conservation issues within the overall urban development process and interlink it with other topics such as tourism development, revitalization of the local economy and local governance. In responding to pressures for the future, inherent in its development pressures, economic conditions, and drive for modernization, it is vital to protect tourism resources and promote community development that focuses on cultural landscapes.

Archaeological tourism is a part of cultural tourism. It is not much different from what we already know from cultural tourism: Some icons belong to the "must-see" sites, and there are lesser-known sites that are nevertheless of outstanding value and relevance from a professional point of view or enjoy great popularity among locals and visitors for various reasons. The motivating forces behind archaeological tourism are a passion for the past and an interest in learning about the ancient or historical cultures that inhabited the area being visited. Archaeological sites and historical places are major tourist attractions worldwide. In the last few years, visits to historical sites have ranked third—after dining in restaurants and shopping—among activities undertaken by people travelling abroad in the cities.





Roman Poetovio is an essential roman town in Slovenia, and there are vast amounts of expert data and material from archaeological excavations. Still, the heritage is partitioned and needs to be adequately presented. There is no proper museum place in Ptuj where the Roman heritage of the area could be given. But we've managed to bind together the individual archaeological remains under one familiar brand – through project ArcheoDanube (Danube Transnational Program). It will from now on be easier to imagine the greatness of the Roman Petoviona since the monuments like Mithras shrine I., Mithras shrine III., Roman brickworks kiln, Roman road, Orpheus monument and many others are now all "under one roof".

By developing the brand and binding archaeological monuments, we got a so-called critical mass of the offer, which will give the tourists a more extensive and diverse cultural tourism offer of the city. With the new brand, individual archaeological remains are integrated into the urban environment of the city of Ptuj. With logical connections within the city, we are offering tourists the opportunity of exploring the roman heritage of the medieval town.

The product brand »Arheološki park Poetovio« was created, which represents a strategic and communication platform that will, through unified visual image and communication, connect the rich archaeological heritage of Ptuj and the tourism offer related to the period of ancient Ptuj. With the familiar brand, we are trying to strengthen the knowledge of the local past and the recognition of the destination by the local population and visitors.

With them, we want to introduce visitors to the rich Roman archaeological heritage in Ptuj, which is now connected under the Poetovio Archaeological Park brand name. The primary purpose of these copies is to connect the Archaeological Park as a whole and meaningfully integrate it into the urban environment. We have chosen three key locations (either the entrance into the city or an important point for further visits) where copies of Roman monuments (found in these locations) will be placed. With this, we want to introduce the rich Roman archaeological heritage of Ptuj, which is now under one brand – "Arheološki park Poetovio" (Archaeological Park Poetovio).



The chosen monuments, which were the basis for the copies, are currently in the depo of the Regional museum Ptuj-Ormož and were so far hidden from the public. Different institutions worked together to



choose monuments and locations: the City municipality of Ptuj, the Institute for the protection of the cultural heritage of Slovenia, the Regional museum Ptuj-Ormož, Ptuj Tourism Public Institute, the Scientific-research centre Bistra Ptuj and representatives of the societies.

Visitors of the Archaeological Park Poetovio can now walk through the park by using the new map of the park — the most important monuments and Roman remains in Ptuj. All the parts of the Archaeological Park will be marked with QR codes and linked to the website www.visitptuj.eu, managed by the "Zavod za turizem Ptuj" organization. Several attempts were made to establish a multifunctional archaeological park in the past, but none succeeded. With the new brand "Arheološki park Poetovio" (Archaeological Park Poetovio), we are a step closer to showing the greatness of the Roman Petoviona.

Archaeological Park Poetovio is more than a record of the past - it is becoming an integral part of the urban identity now and for the future.