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The military vicus. Everyday life in the vicinity of the forts

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Session Abstract: This session focuses on the rise, function, development and population of military vici in relation to the forts in the Roman Empire. Generally, the Roman frontier zone is envisaged rather stereotypically, with military structures such as fortresses with their canabae, forts and watchtowers plus military vici in the vicinity of the forts. However, in many regions our knowledge of military vici, their structures, finds, dates and developments through time, is quite fragmented.

In this session we would like to look in detail into the following questions:

- *Rise and development.* What do we know about the foundation and construction of military vici? When, how and by whom were these settlements built? Were the forts and vici built (almost) simultaneously? Are the developments we can observe in both fort and vicus the same? What is known about the legislation and administration of military vici? And who was responsible for them?
- *Function.* What was the function of the military vicus? Did it play part in the army's supply system? Which facilities were present and what developments can be observed? In how far do these settlements differ from or align with the forts? Are changes in military occupation of forts reflected in the vici? If the fort and its vicus were not (entirely) contemporaneous: what does this imply for the function and role of the vicus? What was the role of the vicus in relation to rural settlements?
- *People.* Who were the builders and residents of the vicus: soldiers or civilians, or both? What clues can archaeological finds give us on the gender, identity and ethnicity of the residents? Can we recognize interactions between the inhabitants of the fort and the vicus (and the vicus and the rural settlements) from the finds? Can changes be observed through time?