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# Multi-period settlements at the edge of the Eastern Alps – Current research on the Bronze and Iron Age in Western Styria

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## Abstract

In the last decades, a large number of Metal Age settlements, especially from the Bronze Age and Late Iron Age, were excavated in Western Styria, both because of construction work and research excavations. In the Deutschlandsberg basin one of the biggest Bronze Age settlements of Styria was partly excavated in the 1990s by the Austrian Federal Monuments Authority, in 2022 new fieldwork brought a better understanding of this site, which consists of a settlement area and possible workshops.

Remains of a subsequent settlement dated to the Early Urnfield period were excavated in 2020 at the nearby hilltop of Ulrichsberg. In the same area as the Bronze Age buildings, some remains of a Late Iron Age and early Roman settlement could be also found, alongside a coeval cemetery in the nearby forest. Through these current excavations, we are able to build a new picture of dense settlement in the Deutschlandsberg basin during the Middle and Late Bronze Age, and at the transition from the Late Iron Age to the Roman period.

A very dense Bronze Age settlement can be demonstrated for the river valleys running eastwards from the Deutschlandsberg basin, whereby structures from the Bronze Age as well as the Iron Age and Roman period can be found on the same settlement sites in almost all Western Styrian valleys. The sites presented here show a remarkable settlement density from the Bronze and Iron Age, which is also comparable to Northern Slovenia and indicates the outstanding importance of the Southeastern Alps in the Metal Ages.

**Keywords:** Southeastern Alps, settlement, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Continuity

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