



Bundesdenkmalamt

Federal Monuments Authority Austria (Bundesdenkmalamt)

The *Federal Monuments Authority Austria* protects and maintains the material cultural heritage of Austria and demonstrates the social importance of this task. Monuments bring the past to mind, form our cultural landscape, are part of our identity and an important element of the image of our country as well as a significant factor in economy and tourism.

The *Federal Monuments Authority Austria* is the professional body that protects the cultural heritage of Austria by law and carries the responsibility for the preservation of the monuments. It is not only a professional authority but also a service agency that spreads the necessary historical and technological knowledge and strives to be open to requests and suggestions. The primary aim is to preserve the cultural heritage in an authentic and undiminished way, as it is an irreplaceable capital for the future.

The image and reputation of Austria are formed considerably by the enormous richness of its monuments. Monument protection and care also represent a commitment on cultural diversity of Europe and the world. Preservation and maintenance of monuments form an essential factor in the Austrian economy. The Federal Monuments Authority Austria lists monuments and puts them under monument conservation. It researches and documents archaeological heritage, decides on export and whereabouts of moveable monuments and is responsible for monument care including structural alterations, restoration, conservation and maintenance of listed buildings. The Federal Monuments Authority Austria strives to arrive at a consensus with the monument owners regarding conservation and use of the monuments. Around 200 staff work to ensure the preservation of the monuments in cooperation with owners, states, municipalities, dioceses and the many highly specialised experts.

The **Department of Archaeology** protects, manages, undertakes research, and documents Austria's archaeological heritage. For the longest periods of human history our archaeological heritage provides the only sources, since there are no written records. But there are also gaps in more recent historiography. The material legacies of our ancestors provide information about everyday life, about population groups and events. Little or nothing of this is reported in written sources. Archaeological preservation (as a part of the monuments authority) therefore looks after Palaeolithic sites ten thousands of years old as well as garbage pits of medieval castles and concentration camps of the Nazi regime.

In every federal state, an area supervisor is available for inquiries, applications and reports of findings, as well as for information on all questions relating to the protection of archaeological monuments and archaeological preservation. In the case of construction projects that require excavations or other archaeological measures, construction delays can be avoided by contacting the area supervisors as early as possible. Archaeological preliminary investigations and excavations are generally not carried out by the Federal Monuments Authority itself, but may be funded in part by it. Archaeological excavations and other archaeological measures may only take place under the

direction of people who have received a relevant university degree and only with the approval of the Federal Monuments Office and in compliance with certain guidelines. Archaeological finds generally belong in equal parts to the people on whose property the finds were made and the "honest

finders" (including whoever commissioned an excavation). The archaeological publications of the Federal Monuments Authority are overseen at the central office in Vienna. The Archaeological Centre Mauerbach is home to the archive, finds depot and specialist library. The tasks of the department also include archaeological heritage research and the assessment of monuments to be protected in accordance with the Monument Protection Act. The so called 'Fundberichte aus Österreich' ('Reports of Findings from Austria') are published annually and provide information on these current research results.

The Department of Archaeology organizes conferences and coordinates working groups on topics related to the preservation of archaeological monuments. It advises and supports the presentation and dissemination of archaeological finds and monuments.