

## ***The prehistory of northwest Europe: a guide to the project database***

As part of the research for the book *The prehistory of northwest Europe*, reports on recent fieldwork on later prehistoric sites in continental northwest Europe were systematically collected. All reports that could be obtained were recorded in a database. An edited version of this database has now been made available to accompany the monograph and provide a tool for further research. This document provides information on the scope of the data collection and the structure of the database.

It should be stressed that the database does not record all recent fieldwork activity *per se*, but rather fieldwork that has generated an accessible report. No claim is made that every single relevant report has been consulted, though much effort was expended in making data collection as comprehensive as possible. With a dataset of this size it is inevitable that some errors will be present, and users with a particular interest in individual sites are strongly advised to consult the relevant original reports.

### ***Scope of data collection***

The geographical scope of data collection comprised Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, northern and western France (Alsace, Aquitaine, Basse-Normandie, Bretagne, Champagne-Ardenne, Haute-Normandie, Île-de-France, Lorraine, Pays de la Loire, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Picardie, and the department of Eure-et-Loire), the Channel Islands, northern and western Germany (Bremen, Hamburg, Hessen, Niedersachsen, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Rheinland-Pfalz, Saarland and Schleswig-Holstein), and the Jutland peninsula of Denmark.

A database record was created for any intrusive field investigation (excavation, watching brief or trench evaluation) that encountered features dated to between the late 6th millennium BC and the end of the 1st century BC. Sites with sparse quantities of unstratified or residual prehistoric artefacts but no corresponding features were normally not recorded. Coring surveys – a common first stage of evaluation in the Netherlands and Flanders – were generally not recorded, as they usually provide little information beyond identifying the presence of a site. A few exceptions were made for coring surveys with associated radiocarbon dates or other useful additional evidence. Where more than one stage of fieldwork was carried out at one locality (e.g. an evaluation followed by an excavation), the information was incorporated into a single site record.

Data was collected from:

- published monographs, journal articles and annual ‘round-ups’ of fieldwork, with visits made to libraries across the region to consult publications unavailable outside their country of origin;
- unpublished ‘grey literature’ reports, where these were available either at accessible centralised archives or via internet repositories.

No attempt was made to record investigations that have yet to generate any report. Unpublished reports that have been retained by the excavating body and not submitted to an archive are also generally not represented; visiting every organisation responsible for fieldwork in northwest Europe (c 400 listed in the database) would have been impractical

within the timescale of the project. Data collection was carried out region-by-region from early 2009 to mid 2011. In each case the aim was to, at a minimum, comprehensively record relevant reported investigations carried out from 1998 up to the time of data collection. It should be said, however, that in many regions the quantity of data available for different parts of this period was variable, often with a fall off for the most recent years due largely to lags in reporting (Fig. 1). The variations in the data sources available in each country are summarised by Tables 1 and 2 and discussed in more detail below.

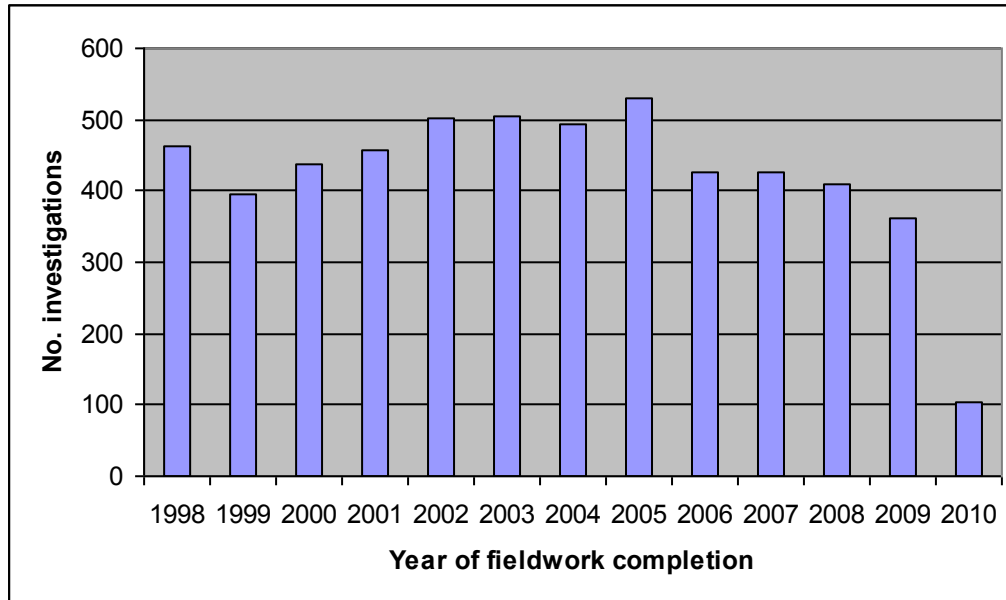


Fig. 1. Date of fieldwork recorded in the database. The years 1996-7 (recorded only for Belgium and France) are excluded. The fall in the most recent years is primarily due to lags in reporting, though the economic crisis of 2007 onwards has also had an effect on the levels of fieldwork in some regions.

### ***Data sources consulted for each country***

#### ***Belgium***

All grey literature reports for Flanders are stored in a central archive held by RO-Vlaanderen in Brussels (visited in 2010). As such, the coverage of Flanders is exhaustive for the years 1997 to 2009 inclusive. The lack of any formalised system of developer-funded archaeology in the Walloon Region means that grey literature reports are absent here, though short notes on fieldwork are systematically published in the *Chronique de l'Archéologie Wallonne* (last available volume covering 2006). Short reports on many of the most important recent excavations in Belgium are also available in the annual conference proceeding volumes *Notae Praehistoricae* and *Lunula Archaeologica Protohistorica*.

#### ***Denmark***

Up to 2005, short notes on almost all fieldwork operations in Denmark were published in the annual volume *Arkæologiske Udgravninger i Danmark* (available online at [www.kulturarv.dk](http://www.kulturarv.dk)). Information on investigations from 2006 onwards is more patchy, but some of the local museums responsible for archaeological fieldwork (9 out of the 24 responsible museums in Jutland) have made short reports on recent excavations available via their websites. These reports (*bygherrerapporter*) all postdate the 2002 introduction of developer funding. Some short reports for very recent fieldwork have also begun to be made available via *Fund og Fortidsminder*, the national online sites and monuments record. No attempt was made to obtain further grey literature reports, given the large quantities of data available from published and online sources.

### *France*

Since 1991, each *Service Régional d'Archéologie* (SRA) has theoretically had the duty of publishing an annual round-up of all archaeological activity in its region, the *Bilan Scientifique Régional* (BSR). Each project is presented under the form of a short notice (generally less than a page) accompanied in a few instances by a plan or an illustration of notable features or artefacts. The SRAs have an obligation to make the BSRs readily available, either online or as paper copies on request. In practice, however, several regions have ceased to publish BSRs, especially since the changes to the legal framework of archaeology of 2003-2004. Furthermore, in some regions there is a marked delay between the year of investigation reported in a BSR and its eventual publication. As a result, BSRs for 2008 and 2009 were in most cases not available at the time of data collection.

This documentary gap is partially addressed by the online DOLIA catalogue managed by the INRAP, the state body responsible for the majority of development-led fieldwork in France. DOLIA was launched in the second half of 2009 and lists operations undertaken by the INRAP, providing a brief note similar to those in the BSRs. In a growing number of cases, a full report is also available as a PDF document. The comprehensiveness of the coverage seems to be patchy for pre-2008 activities, but is exhaustive from 2008 onwards. The entire DOLIA catalogue was browsed during summer 2010.

Paper copies of grey literature reports on fieldwork by the INRAP and other licensed organisations are held in the archive of the relevant SRA. Visits to record grey literature were made to archives in two regions for which BSR coverage is limited: Bretagne (November 2010) and Poitou-Charentes (June 2011).

### *Germany*

In Germany, responsibility for protecting archaeological heritage is devolved to the state (*Land*) level. Each state has one or more 'monument office' (*Amt für Bodendenkmalpflege*) that carries out or monitors fieldwork, and maintains an archaeological archive. This devolution has resulted in varying approaches to reporting fieldwork. The monument offices within the study region were systematically visited between 2009 and 2011 (*Landesarchäologie Bremen, Helms-Museum* (Hamburg), *Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Hessen* (Wiesbaden and Marburg), *Niedersächsisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege* (Hannover), *LVR-Amt für Bodendenkmalpflege im Rheinland* (Bonn), *Römisch-Germanisches Museum Köln, LWL-Archäologie für*

*Westfalen* (Münster), *Direktion Landesarchäologie Rheinland-Pfalz* (Koblenz and Trier), *Archäologisches Landesamt Schleswig-Holstein* and *Schleswig-Holsteinisches Landesmuseum*; permission to visit the monument office in Saarland was refused). This demonstrated that unpublished grey literature reports on recent fieldwork are scarce or absent in most states, as the system for development-led archaeology does not require their production. The main exceptions are Hessen and the *Landschaftsverband Rheinland*, where commercial excavation firms operate and have produced significant numbers of reports. Elsewhere, fieldwork results are reported by publishing interim articles or short notes. In some areas comprehensive fieldwork ‘round up’ volumes are produced – though often with a lag of a few years – while in others the emphasis is on reporting the highlights of recent work in regional periodicals (e.g. *Archäologische Nachrichten aus Schleswig-Holstein*).

By using these different sources, database coverage of the reported fieldwork for each state can be regarded as largely comprehensive for reports produced up to the time that the relevant monument office was visited (i.e. between mid 2009 and early 2011). For northwest Germany as a whole, investigations carried out between 1998 and 2008 are well represented in the database, with slightly reduced numbers from 2009 and much fewer from 2010.

#### *Luxembourg*

The *Musée National d'Histoire et d'Art* is the authority responsible for archaeology in Luxembourg, and all reports on development-led and non-development-led fieldwork are lodged in their archive. This was visited in February 2011.

#### *Netherlands*

Under the Dutch system for development-led archaeology, a grey literature report on each fieldwork operation must be deposited with the archive of the Dutch state heritage body (*Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed*) in Amersfoort. This was visited in 2009 and again in February 2010. Many reports are also available via the national internet repository DANS-EASY (<https://easy.dans.knaw.nl>) and on the websites of individual fieldwork organisations. Database coverage can be regarded as largely comprehensive for reports produced up to 2009. Investigations carried out between 1998 and 2007 are well represented in the database, with slightly reduced numbers from 2008 and much fewer from 2009.

Region	Date of data collection	Dates of fieldwork covered	No. investigations recorded	Published monograph/article	Note in annual ‘round up’ / <i>Bilan Scientifique</i>	Grey literature report
Belgium	2010	1996-2010 (Wallonia) 1997-2010 (Flanders)	210	147 (70%)	59 (28%)	39 (19%)
Netherlands	2009-early 2010	1998-2009	635	77 (12%)	24 (4%)	565 (89%)
Luxembourg	early 2011	1998-2010	19	9 (47%)	0	15 (79%)
NW France	2009-2011	1996-2010 (Picardie)	2747	252 (9%)	1882 (69%)	946 (34%)

		1997-2010 (elsewhere)				
NW Germany	2009-early 2011	1998-2009/10	852	459 (54%)	358 (42%)	134 (16%)
Jutland	early 2011	1998-2010	1273	97 (8%)	1094 (86%)	142 (11%)

Table 1. Summary of the data sources consulted for each region. The percentages in the last three columns add up to more than 100% as some investigations are reported through more than one medium.

Country	Region	Publication	Coverage at time of data collection
Belgium	Walloon Region	<i>Chronique de l'Archéologie Wallonne</i>	to 2006
Denmark	national	<i>Arkæologisk Udgravninger i Danmark</i>	to 2005 (now defunct)
France	Alsace	<i>Bilan Scientifique Régional</i>	1997-2003
	Aquitaine	<i>Bilan Scientifique Régional</i>	1997-2006
	Basse-Normandie	<i>Bilan Scientifique Régional</i>	1997-2009
	Bretagne	<i>Bilan Scientifique Régional</i>	1997-98
	Champagne-Ardenne	<i>Bilan Scientifique Régional</i>	1997-2004
	Haute-Normandie	<i>Bilan Scientifique Régional</i>	1997-2001; 2003-06
	Île-de-France	<i>Bilan Scientifique Régional</i>	1997-98
	Lorraine	<i>Bilan Scientifique Régional</i>	1997-2001
	Nord-Pas-de-Calais	<i>Bilan Scientifique Régional</i>	1997-2007
	Pays de la Loire	<i>Bilan Scientifique Régional</i>	1997-99, 2001-04, 2008
	Picardie	<i>Bilan Scientifique Régional</i>	1996-2007
	Poitou-Charentes	<i>Bilan Scientifique Régional</i>	1997-99; 2008-10
Germany	Hessen	'Fundchronik für die Jahre...', in <i>Fundberichte aus Hessen</i>	to 2000
	Niedersachsen	<i>Fundchronik Niedersachsen</i> (Nachrichten aus Niedersachsens Urgeschichte Beiheft)	to 2009
	Nordrhein-Westfalen (Rhineland)	'Ausgrabungen, Funde und Befunde...', in <i>Bonner Jahrbücher</i>	to 2006
	Nordrhein-Westfalen (Westfalen-Lippe)	<i>Neujahrgruss. Jahresbericht der LWL-Archäologie für Westfalen und der Altertumskommission für Westfalen</i>	to 2009 (now defunct)
Netherlands	Nord- and Zuid-Holland	<i>Archeologische Kroniek Holland</i>	to 2009

Table 2. Major published annual 'round ups' claiming comprehensive coverage of fieldwork