

Image1.jpg:

Entrance to the Bacho Kiro Cave (Bulgaria). The excavations are just inside the entrance and to the left. The cave extends over 3 km and is a popular tourist destination. (Picture credit: Nikolay Zaheriev, MPI EVA Leipzig, License: CC-BY-SA 2.0)

Image2.jpg:

Excavations at Bacho Kiro Cave (Bulgaria). The excavator in the foreground is recording artifacts (each marked with a colored pin) from the Initial Upper Paleolithic Layer I in the Niche sector. The bags with barcodes on them are for individual artifacts once their position has been recorded with a total station. The main sector is shown in the background. (Picture credit: Željko Režek, MPI EVA Leipzig, License: CC-BY-SA 2.0)

Image3.jpg:

Excavations in Initial Upper Paleolithic Layer I at Bacho Kiro Cave (Bulgaria). Four *Homo sapiens* bones were recovered from this layer along with a rich stone tool assemblage, animal bones, bone tools, and pendants. (Picture credit: Tsenka Tsanova, MPI EVA Leipzig, License: CC-BY-SA 2.0)

Image4.jpg:

The Niche 1 sector (left) and the Main sector (right) during our excavations of Bacho Kiro Cave (Bulgaria). The cement and mud area in the foreground was previously excavated in the 1970s. Our excavations picked up where these excavations left off. (Picture credit: Tsenka Tsanova, MPI EVA Leipzig, License: CC-BY-SA 2.0)

Image5.jpg:

One of the excavation directors, Tsenka Tsanova of the Department of Human Evolution at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology (Leipzig, German), taking sediment samples for DNA analysis. (Picture credit: Nikolay Zahariev, MPI EVA Leipzig, License: CC-BY-SA 2.0)

Image6.jpg:

Personal ornaments and bone tools from Bacho Kiro Cave (left) and from Grotte du Renne (France, right). The Bacho Kiro Cave artifacts are attributed to *Homo sapiens* and date to approximately 45,000 years ago. The Grotte du Renne artifacts are attributed to Neandertals and are not quite as old. (Picture credit: Rosen Spasov and Geoff Smith, MPI EVA Leipzig, License: CC-BY-SA 2.0)

Image7.jpg:

Stone artifacts from the Initial Upper Paleolithic at Bacho Kiro Cave: **1-3, 5-7** Pointed blades and fragments from Layer I; **4** Sandstone bead with morphology similar to bone beads; **8** The longest complete blade. (Picture credit: Tsenka Tsanova, MPI EVA Leipzig, License: CC-BY-SA 2.0)