

Starčevo–Körös–Criș Profile

(GuideBG 2026.1)

Culture or complex or horizon: Starčevo–Körös–Criș complex

Taxonomic level: Supra-regional complex (sometimes described as an Early Neolithic horizon)

Chronology anchor: c. 6200–5500 calBC (Early Neolithic), correlated to Bulgaria mainly through Karanovo I–II and related early farming sites.

Method framework version: GuideBG 2026.1

Evidence cut off (this profile): 31 Jan 2026

Evidence Grade (polygon confidence): B (very strong ceramic and subsistence signal; settlement and mortuary are real but less diagnostic at this broad taxonomic scale).

Domain scores (0 - 5)

Domain	Score (0 to 5)
Settlement	3
Built environment	3
Mortuary	2
Ceramics	5
Tools and technology	3
Metallurgy and materials	0
Exchange and connectivity	4
Subsistence	4
Social differentiation	1
Taxonomic stability	4

Interpretation of the shape: The complex is defined first and foremost through ceramic diagnosis and cross-regional correlation (Starčevo, Körös, Criş and Bulgarian Karanovo I–II equivalences), while subsistence is strongly diagnostic because the early farming package is consistently documented. Exchange is high because long-distance materials and corridor-based connectivity are visible from the start of the Neolithic spread, but settlement and architecture are more variable and therefore less distinctive at this taxonomic scale.

Evidence logic VCD (Visibility, Consistency, Distinctiveness)

Domain	Visibility	Consistency	Distinctiveness	VCD suggested score	Final score	Logic note
Settlement	4	3	2	3	3	Well documented early farming settlements, but patterns vary regionally and are not uniquely diagnostic.

Built environment	4	3	2	3	3	Domestic architecture is visible and recurring, yet broadly shared across early farming groups.
Mortuary	3	2	1	2	2	Present but usually not the primary criterion for defining the complex.
Ceramics	5	5	5	5	5	Main diagnostic system for defining and correlating Starčevo, Körös and Criş.
Tools and technology	4	3	2	3	3	Useful support, but typically secondary to ceramic definitions at this scale.
Metallurgy and materials	0	0	0	0	0	No metallurgical signature expected for this early farming horizon.
Exchange and connectivity	4	3	4	4	4	Obsidian and shell networks plus corridor logic make connectivity strongly diagnostic.
Subsistence	4	4	3	4	4	The farming package is consistent and analytically

						visible, differentiating early farmers from foragers.
Social differentiation	2	1	1	1	1	Strong institutional inequality is not consistently visible or diagnostic for the complex.
Funeral practices	3	2	2	2		Separating ritual patterning from inequality supports cleaner interpretation of mortuary evidence.
Taxonomic stability	5	4	3	4	4	Umbrella term is widely used, but national traditions often prefer local labels.

Evidence anchors used for each high scoring domain (4 - 5)

High scoring domain	Evidence anchors (short)	What the anchors support
Ceramics (5)	Ceramic typology is the main mechanism for correlating Starčevo, Körös, Criş and Karanovo I–II equivalences.	Primary definitional criterion and correlation tool across regions.
Subsistence (4)	Early farming package and its spread along major valleys (Struma, Mesta, Maritsa) and the Danube system.	Coherent economic signature of early farmers and a tracer of spread.
Exchange and connectivity (4)	Early long-distance materials (for example Carpathian obsidian, shell ornaments) and corridor-based connectivity. Step 2 - Elicit - Archaeologica...	Interaction networks present from the beginning of the Neolithic.
Taxonomic stability (4)	Multi-label practice: local names (Starčevo, Körös, Criş) versus umbrella label; naming driven mainly by ceramics and chronology.	Why GuideBG uses a preferred label while listing synonyms for disambiguation.

Sources used (and evidence cut off)

This filled profile is based on the synthesized evidence and debates captured in the provided [Elicit](#) reports for (1) chronology and reference sites, (2) interaction, exchange and corridors, and (3) terminology and multi-label practice for Early Neolithic units.