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INVENTORY AND PROMOTION OF MINING HERITAGE IN CROATIA

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Historic mining sites represent a mining heritage that can be classified as a subset of industrial heritage. The promotion of mining heritage is particularly important nowadays, as the EU economy depends on mineral resources, while the public perception of mining as an environmentally harmful industry affects the wide acceptance and approval of mining activities. Therefore, the ongoing European wider society learning project "MineHeritage" aims to inform the wider society about the importance of raw materials for the development of European society. As part of the project, a Croatian team investigated all important historical mining sites of ores and industrial minerals and filled the European database of ancient mining sites with all relevant data. From this database, four Croatian sites that are particularly valuable not only as industrial (mining) heritage, but also as cultural, historical and natural (geological) heritage have been selected for promotion. For each site, a 16-page brochure and a short educational video were prepared.

The sulfur mine in Radoboj, which was in operation in the 19th century, is no longer available for restoration. However, thanks to the local community, the Radboa Museum has been opened, where, among other things, the world-famous Radoboj machine for purification of sulfur can be seen. The copper and iron mine in Rude has a long history, dating from Middle Ages (probably even from Roman times) to the 20th century. The local community made great efforts and opened a part of the mine to visitors. Now the mine is even officially protected as a cultural heritage site. The gray pyritized bauxite mine Minjera near Sovinjak is the first bauxite mine in the world. It was mined more than 400 years ago until the second half of the 19th century. Sulphuric acid, alum, vitriol and Berlin blue were produced. Descriptions and schemes from archives show that the factory was very modern and advanced at that time. Intensive silver mining, metallurgy and minting in Trogovska gora was introduced by the noble family Zrinski in Middle Ages during the constant treat of Ottoman Empire. Today, only the fortress and a blast furnace are preserved and represent an already protected heritage. The mining sites of Radoboj, Rude, Sovinjak and Trogvaska gora are valuable examples of industrial heritage that raise awareness of the importance of mining and raw materials and offer great opportunities for tourism, education and popularization of science and technology.

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