

Call for Papers

European Labour History Network Conference 2026 – Barcelona

Session: “Extractive Industry under Dictatorship in the 20th Century: Social, Political and Environmental Issues”

Organizers: Labour in Mining Working Group.

The mining sector occupied a central role in shaping the economic, political, and social history of many countries throughout the 20th century. As a strategic industry, mining was closely tied to national development agendas, regimes of labour control, environmental transformations, and the consolidation of state power.

This panel aims to explore the labour, social, political, and environmental dimensions of the mining sector under dictatorial regimes during the 20th century. While we are particularly interested in European cases, we also strongly encourage contributions that examine similar processes in other parts of the world—such as Latin America, but we could consider other cases in Africa or Asia—to foster comparative perspectives and transregional dialogues.

We invite paper proposals that address, among others, the following topics:

Labour regimes and working conditions; state violence and labour discipline; occupational health and safety;

Industrial relations and collective action: trade unionism, strikes, worker mobilization, and their repression or negotiation by authoritarian regimes;

The role of mining in economic and political planning under dictatorships: including its ideological instrumentalization in fascist, communist, or military regimes;

The responses of dictatorial regimes to the environmental impacts of mining and the narratives of progress or sacrifice that justified extractive policies.

We are especially interested in interdisciplinary approaches that bridge labour history with environmental history, political economy, social history, or the history of science and technology. Contributions may be based on local case studies, national analyses, or comparative and transregional frameworks.

Deadline for abstract submission: 15 October 2025

Please send a 250–300 word abstract and a short CV to: labourinmining@gmail.com; josejgg@ual.es; or francesca.sanna@univ-tlse2.fr

Panel organizers:

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