



European Route
of Industrial Heritage

Cultural route
of the Council of Europe
Itinéraire culturel
du Conseil de l'Europe



International Conference on Greenways at the 12th EGA 2025

Basque Country, oct 2025

Javier Puertas



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Co-funded by
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INDUSTRIAL TOURISM

CURRENT SITUATION IN EUROPE, SPAIN AND THE BASQUE COUNTRY

What's ERIH

- ▶ ERIH is THE (tourist) information network of the most important industrial heritage sites in Europe accessible to the public and is the nexus of all those locations that tell the fascinating story of European industrialisation through their tangible and intangible heritage.
- ▶ The most important exchange platform for experts in industrial heritage tourism and marketing
- ▶ The voice of industrial heritage in Europe
- ▶ A strong brand in industrial heritage tourism!

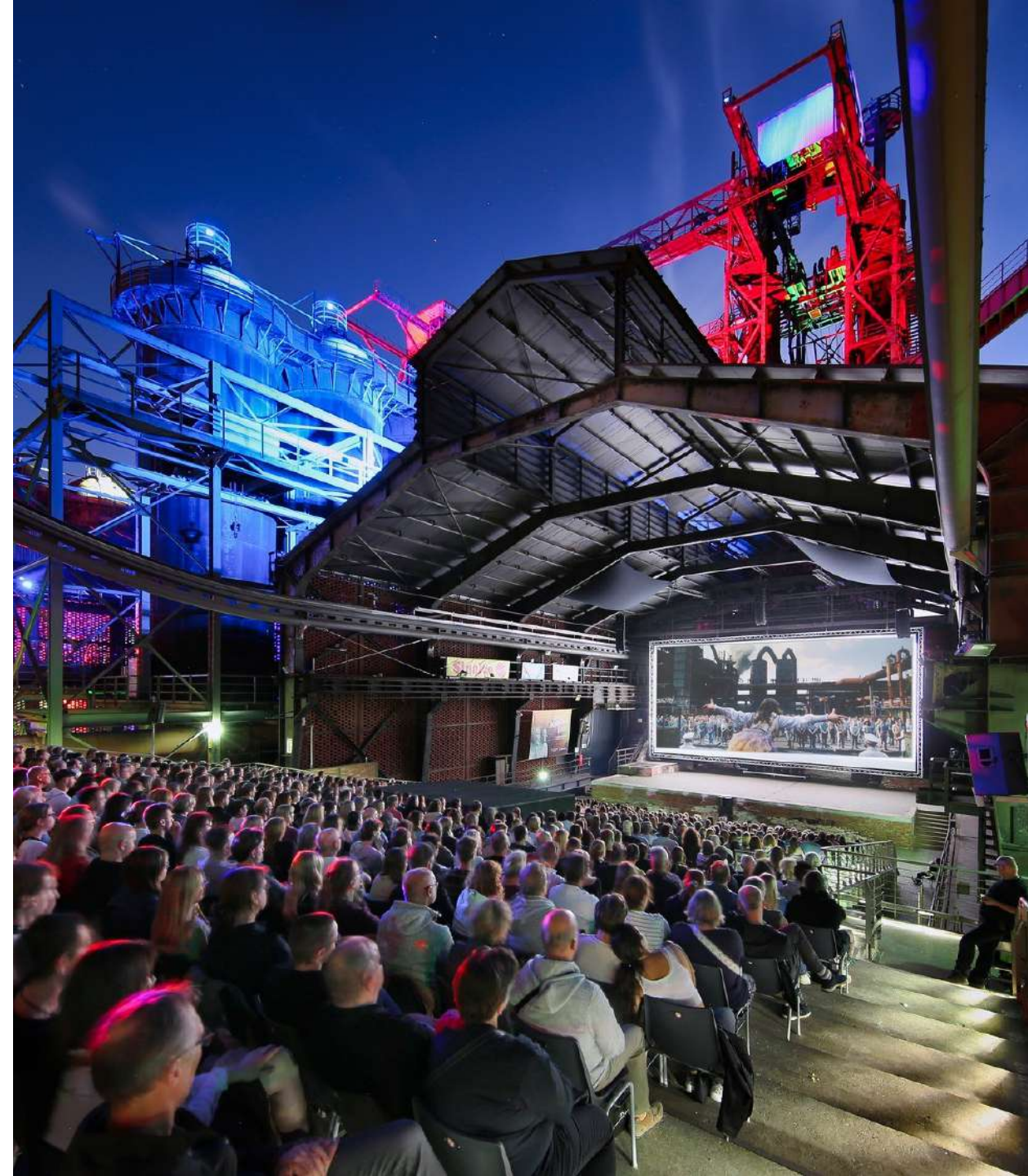
ERIH's aims

Interpretation

- ▶ show the European links of industrialisation and our shared European legacy
- ▶ tell people the story of industrialisation and invite them on an exciting journey into European industrial history

Promotion

- ▶ use the potential of industrial heritage tourism for local or regional economic development
- ▶ establish “Industrial Heritage” as a European brand (ERIH)
- ▶ create an information platform for tourists, visitors and experts



ERIH's aims

Research & Knowledge

- ▶ Contribute to research on the European dimensions of technique, technology and the social and cultural history of industrialisation.
- ▶ Present the knowledge to a broad general public

Preservation

- ▶ Promote the conservation of industrial heritage sites



European Route of Industrial Heritage



ERIH'S management structure



Association

ERIH network is run by a registered association established under German law named **ERIH-European Route of Industrial Heritage e.V.**

Membership

ERIH e.V. has **more than 400 paying active members from 30 European countries**. Members are industrial heritage sites, public or private organisations / authorities, corporate members and individuals

Board / Office

The organs of the association are the **board of management** and the **general assembly**. The board has commissioned a **general secretary** to manage the office

Representatives

National Representatives are the national contact points in their respective country, appointed by the ERIH board

ERIH'S structure



Sites

ERIH presents **over 2,500 sites** from all European countries as basis of the (virtual) route system. Selection criteria: **presentation of industrial history and open at least two days a week in the tourist season**

Anchor Points

Over 110 of these sites are so-called Anchor Points, **sites of exceptional historical importance in terms of industrial heritage which also offer a high-quality visitor experience**

Regional Routes

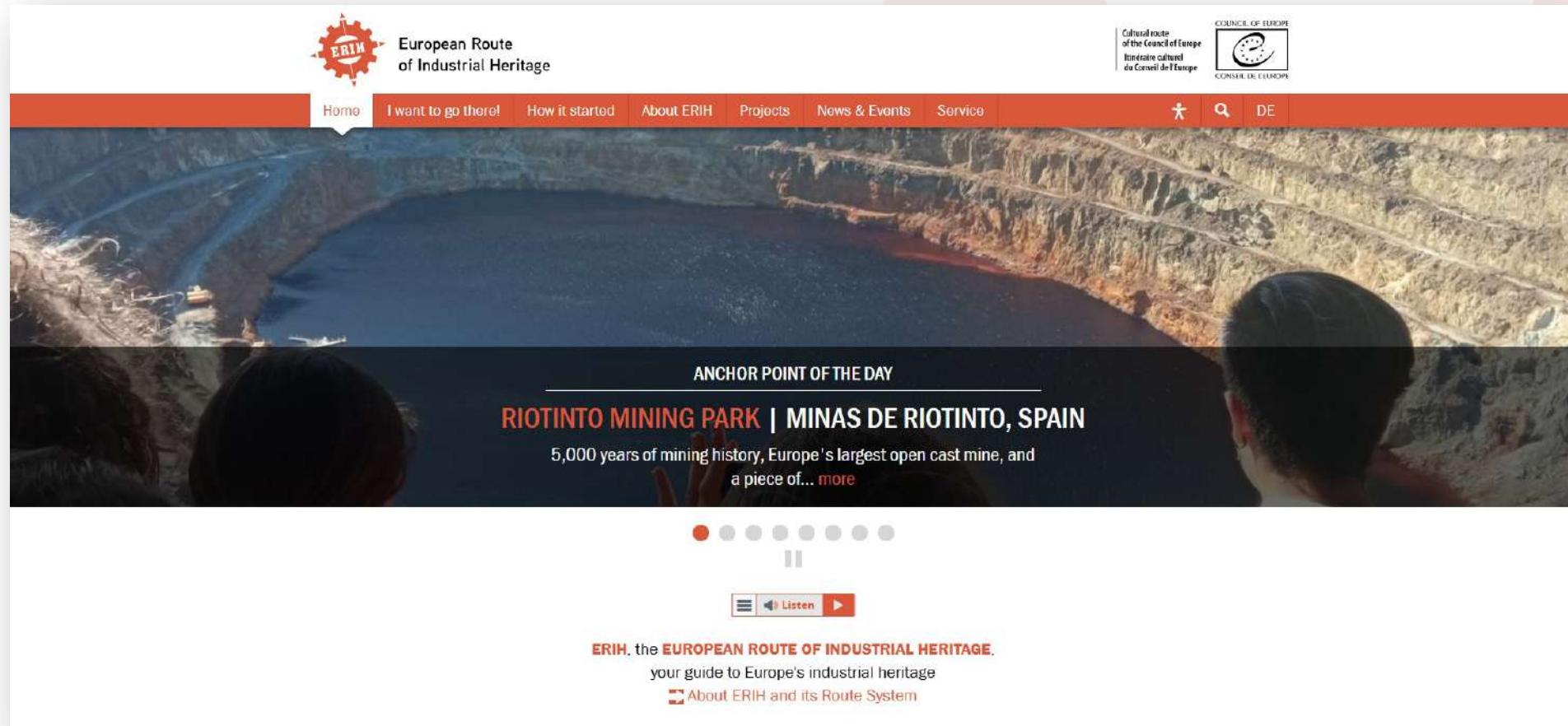
25 Regional Routes introduce in more detail the industrial history of landscapes, which were particularly influenced by industrialisation and today have some industrial heritage sites of tourist interest

Theme Routes

All locations are assigned to one or more of **16 European Theme Routes, which represent branches of industry** and show the variety and the inter-linkages of European industrial history and their common roots

ERIH website

www.erih.net



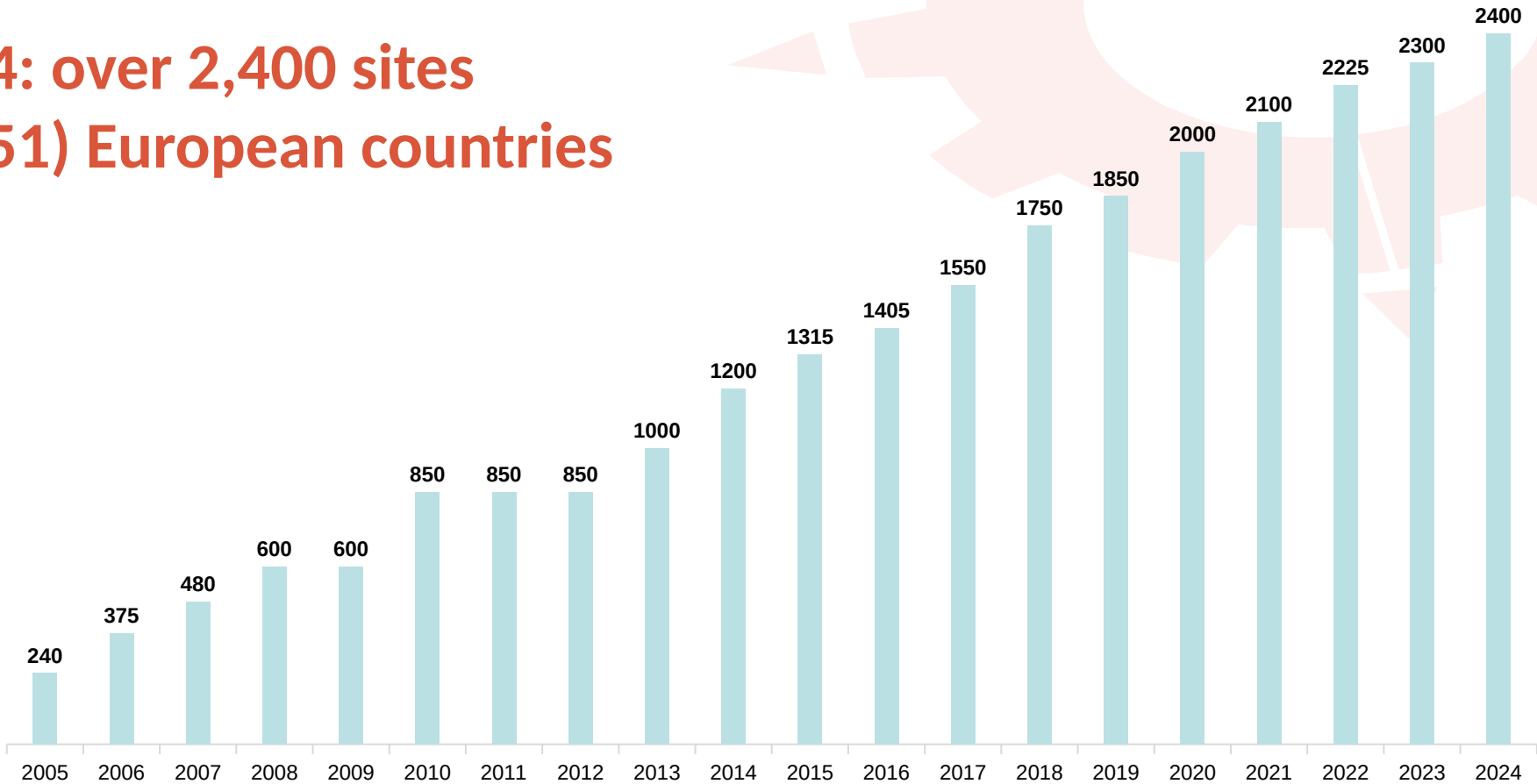
ERIH website

Monat	Tagesdurchschnitt				Monats-Summe					
	Anfragen	Dateien	Seiten	Besuche	Rechner	kb	Besuche	Seiten	Dateien	Anfragen
Okt 2024	215782	197219	68274	10300	39429	112205680	164812	1092393	3155510	3452525
Sep 2024	171371	149309	82338	10925	59201	183201514	327762	2470146	4479289	5141153
Aug 2024	234860	204768	179253	11297	54322	290291554	350226	5556867	6347826	7280672
Jul 2024	368652	339998	331747	10027	54599	626219238	310844	10284186	10539962	11428231
Jun 2024	259302	229937	218337	8068	53404	375478534	242049	6550134	6898137	7779069
Mai 2024	156084	106927	87135	7338	57107	144734447	227491	2701214	3314737	4838624
Apr 2024	225938	206739	129342	14025	54569	234150483	420752	3880265	6202187	6778143
Mar 2024	199934	185442	112941	8263	55848	205930087	256183	3501188	5748706	6197959
Feb 2024	183204	167014	121421	8904	61566	197558200	258222	3521235	4843407	5312923
Jan 2024	167298	153936	116222	6298	57533	180052738	195246	3602889	4772039	5186245
Dez 2023	138686	124147	95101	6339	49079	110587360	196534	2948156	3848583	4299272
Nov 2023	149064	133387	78529	4607	52909	139418671	138229	2355891	4001635	4471942
Summen						2799828506	3088350	48464564	64152018	72166758

on average **8,870** visits to the website per day

ERIH website

Total 2024: over 2,400 sites from all (51) European countries



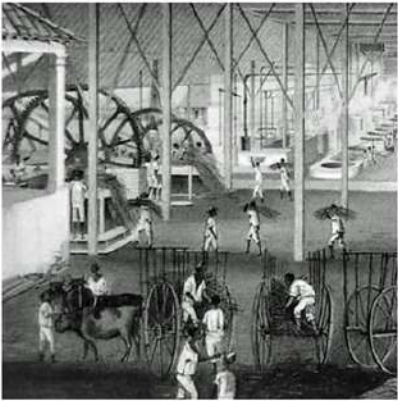
ERIH website

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THE DARK SIDES OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

SLAVERY AND COLONIALISM



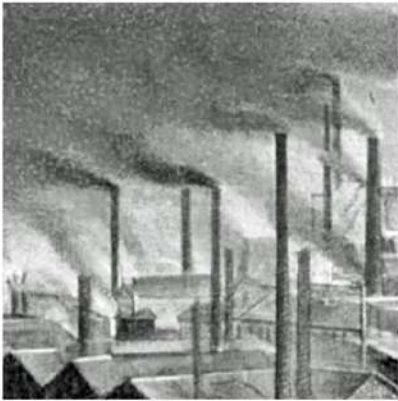
 For some 75 years, historians have argued about the role that slavery and colonialism played in industrialisation.

WORKERS' MISERY & LABOUR MOVEMENT



 In the second half of the 18th century, Great Britain experienced strong population growth - one of the

DESTRUCTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT



 With the Industrial Revolution, humanity set in motion an ongoing, seemingly unstoppable process of ecological

 **European Route of Industrial Heritage**

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ON THE DARK SIDES OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION: WORKERS' MISERY AND LABOUR MOVEMENT

 [Listen](#)

In the second half of the 18th century, Great Britain experienced strong population growth - one of the prerequisites for the Industrial Revolution, as the necessary labour force was now available. However, for too many people, sweat work in the burgeoning industrial cities, as mechanisation put millions of artisans out of work, and many farmers sought new employment as their farms became unprofitable after being threatened by natural disasters. In Manchester, the first industrial city, the population increased sixfold between 1711 and 1802. In London, it increased by about 130% between 1800 and 1856, and in Paris, where industrialisation began later - it doubled.

Nowhere was prepared for the onslaught, and slums grew in the industrial cities because there was neither enough housing nor sewage or drinking water. Moreover, those who did find work were paid a pittance, enough only for the cheapest accommodation. People slept five to a bed - and often it was a single room where they worked. Others lived in damp cellars, dark alleyways or holes in the ground.

Notorious examples of housing ghettos are 'back to backs', such as those in Birmingham in the West Midlands. Long rows of small houses built back to back so that only the front had windows, with tiny back gardens where the poor stood and pigs often lived. The situation was even worse in the tenement blocks. Berlin became a model, where speculators built multi-storey blocks with up to six backyards, squeezing in more multi-story blocks. Several thousand people lived in these estates.



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ON THE DARK SIDES OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION: DESTRUCTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

 [Listen](#)

With the Industrial Revolution, humanity set in motion an ongoing, seemingly unstoppable process of ecological destruction and major health risks. Even if we ignore the large-scale transformation of natural landscapes and the overexploitation of resources, industrial processes have already caused so much and so varied damage to nature and human health that it is still taking a long time to record the pollutants and their complex effects - and even longer to combat them, which has been massively hampered by economic interests.

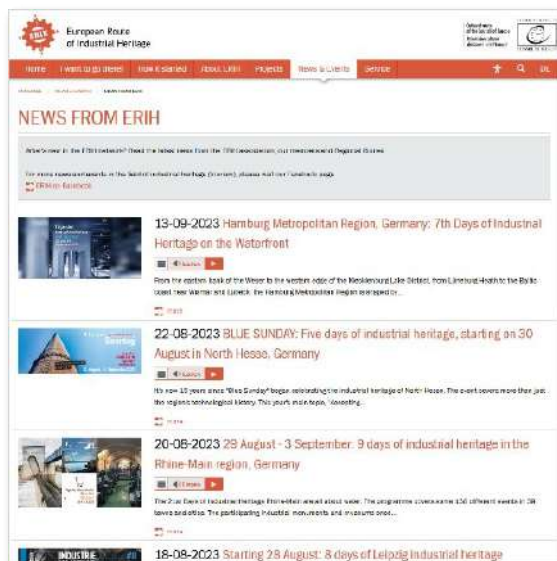
There is evidence of the environmental damage caused by the large-scale industrial operations of the Romans in ancient times: one smelter, glassworks, potteries and industrial facilities not only consumed vast quantities of firewood, but also produced slag over huge areas of land. The hills of Las Médulas in northern Spain, where Roman water-powered gold mining left a grotesquely deformed man-made landscape, are still a vivid example of ancient landscape destruction.

In the Middle Ages, local authorities were concerned about the air pollution caused by the roasting of flax. From the 15th century onwards, 'smokestacks' became a familiar sight. Industry is believed to be the first emitting, poisonous gases from the reduction of arsenic and sulphur by roasting ores. But soon it came to include the fires from other smelting processes as well. In the 17th century, observers in London - including William Shakespeare - noted the smell of sulphur in the city due to the burning of coal in tenements and lime kilns. Sulphurous gases in the air we breathe then became one of the greatest health hazards in industrial



ERIH communication

News from ERIH



Several times a year: on our website **news from the ERIH association**, our members and **Regional Routes**

ERIH newsletter



Four times a year our newsletter reports on the most important developments as well as the **current and planned projects in the ERIH network**

ERIH event calendar



In our **"Save the date"** section we list events, conferences, trade fairs and cultural festivals in Europe dealing with industrial heritage (tourism)

ERIH social media



- communication plan
- 2 posts / week

www.facebook.com/erih



- communication plan
- 2 posts / week

www.instagram.com/erih_industrialheritage

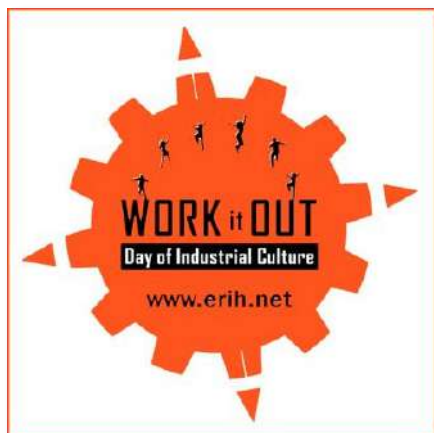


- over 250 links to videos
- in sorted playlists
- over 50 channels

www.youtube.com/@erih-net

ERIH projects

Dance event



After a successful start in 2018, ERIH annually organises a special event which units ERIH-sites all over Europe with a spectacular **dance event** for kids and teens: **"WORK it OUT"**

Survey



ERIH Industrial Heritage Barometer
Since 2018 ERIH in cooperation with the Regionalverband Ruhr carries out an annual survey of industrial heritage sites in Europe

Exchange



ERIH on Tour
The project offered for ERIH members comprises the twinning of **thematically similar sites to share experience and good practice** and to develop skills and competences

Knowledge transfer



The European Industrial Heritage Summer School is aimed at students from a variety of disciplines. The **intensive program** combines interdisciplinary **knowledge transfer** with practical project work.

ERIH projects

The continuous growth of the ERIH network is also largely thanks to the **support of Creative Europe Network Funding.**

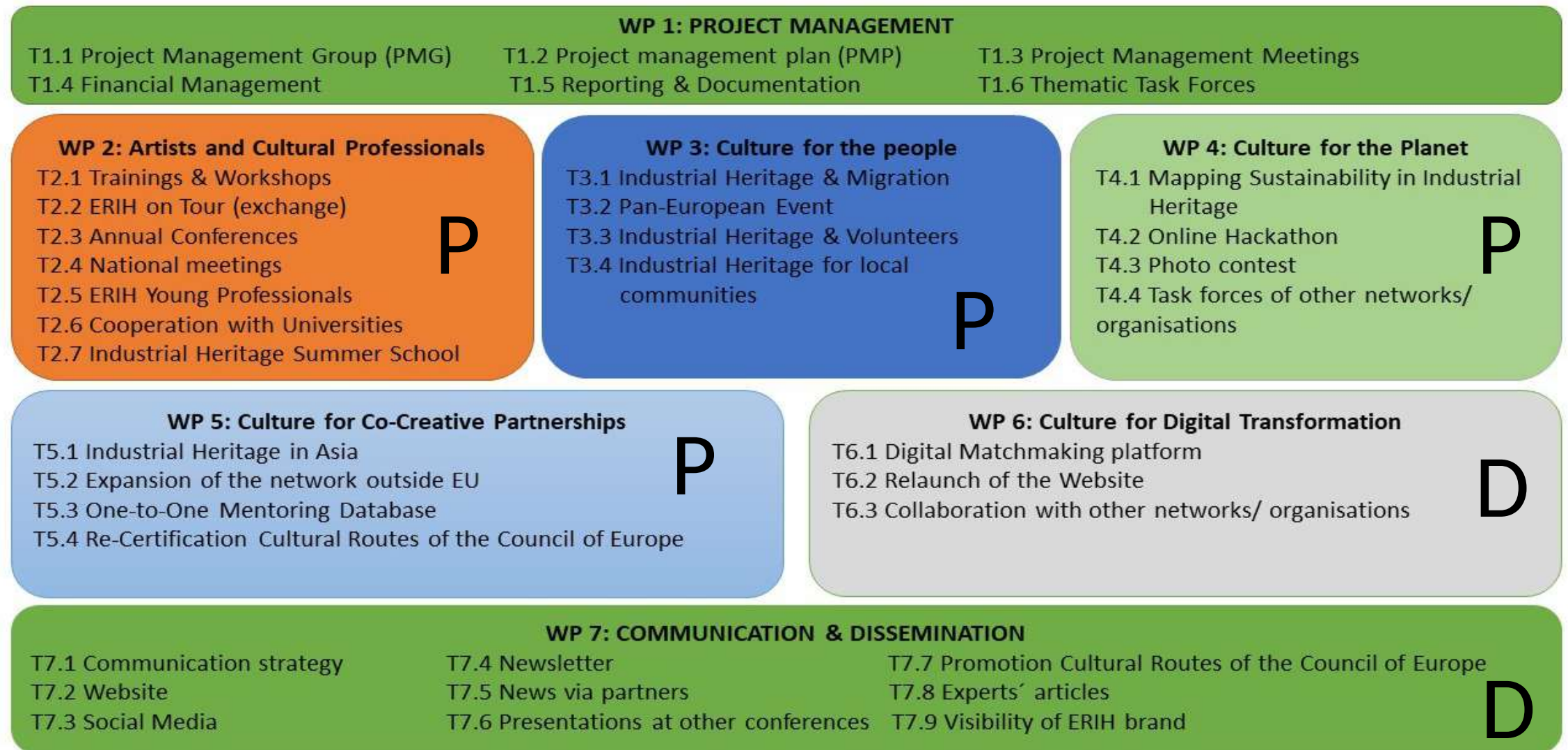
This funding has enabled ERIH to professionalize, expand and strengthen its position as the "voice" for European industrial heritage and to raise public awareness of the common industrial heritage in Europe.



**New Creative Europe Networks funding
application Project: SHINE4future
(2025-2028)**

Total volume 1.9 million euros

ERIH work programme for the next four years



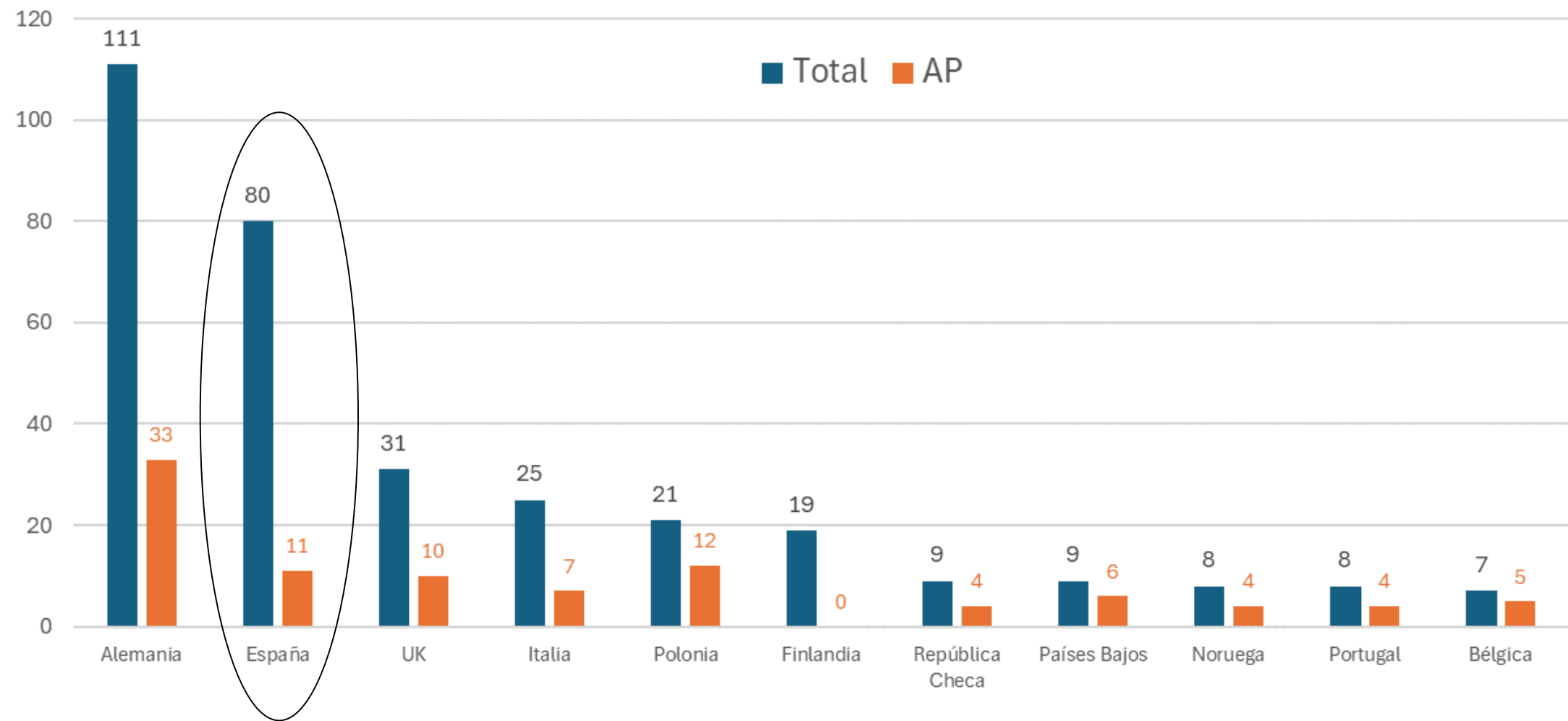
ERIH in Spain



80 MEMBERS

- 66 sites
- 11 Anchor Points
- 3 Regional Routes
 - Euskadi
 - Asturias
 - Catalunya

ERIH in Spain



ERIH in Spain



Anchor Point
European Route
of Industrial Heritage

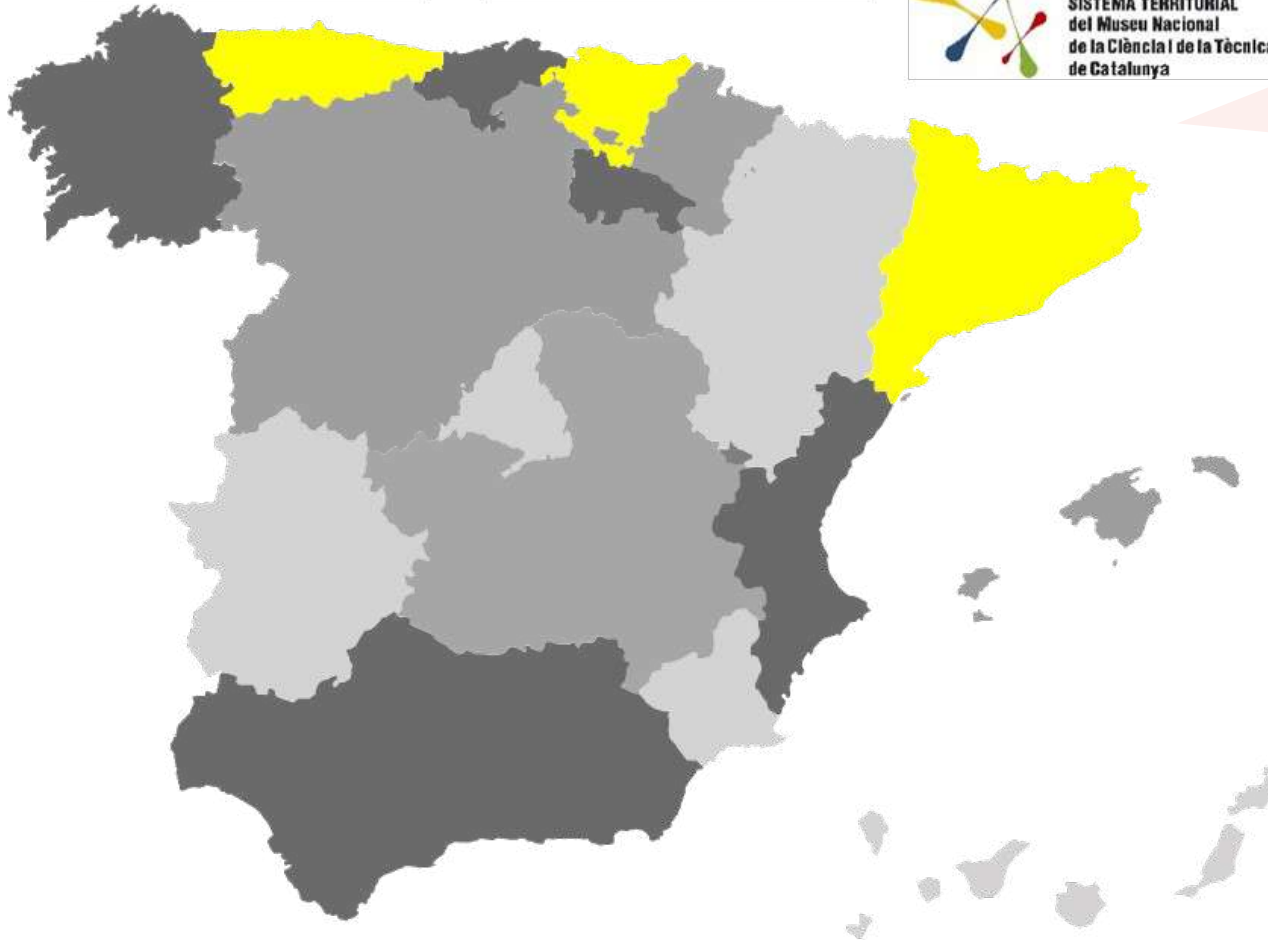


ANCHOR POINTS

1. Almadén Mining Park UNESCO
2. AGBAR Water Museum
3. Asturian Railway Museum
4. Riotinto Mining Park
5. Museum of the Iron and Steel Industry and Mining of Castilla and León
6. Pozo Soton Mine
7. National Museum of Science and Technology of Catalonia
8. La Encartada Factory-Museum
9. Basque Railway Museum
10. Añana Salt Valley
11. Energy - Light Museum Ponferrada

ERIH in Spain

Led by the Ministry of Tourism



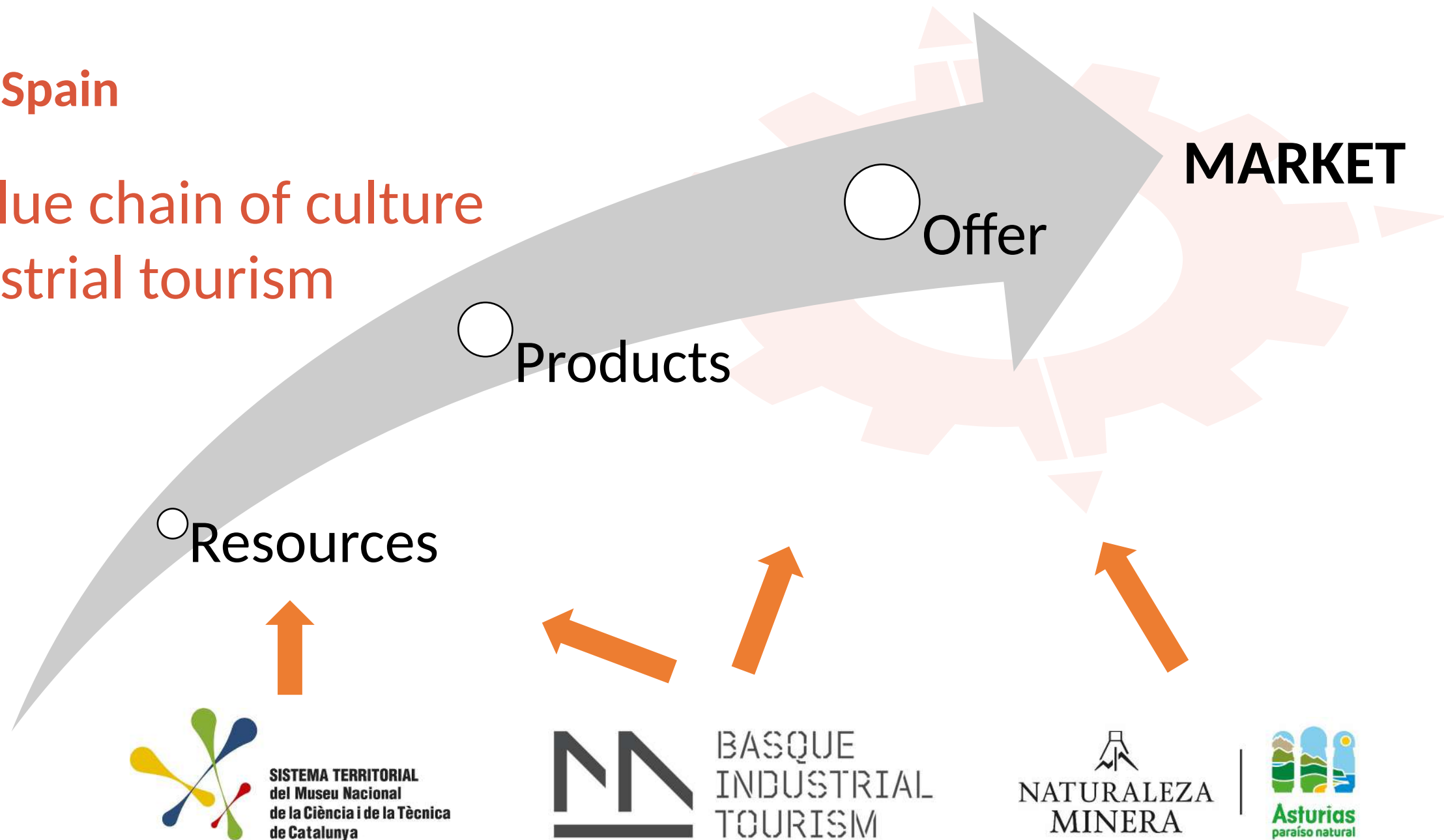
Led by the Ministry of Culture

REGIONAL ROUTES

1. Basque Industrial Tourism Network (Iron&Steel)
2. Industrial Tourism in Asturias (Coal mines)
3. Territorial Museum System (Textil)

ERIH in Spain

The value chain of culture & industrial tourism



SISTEMA TERRITORIAL
del Museu Nacional
de la Ciència i de la Tècnica
de Catalunya

29 museums and heritage spaces to discover the industrialization of Catalonia

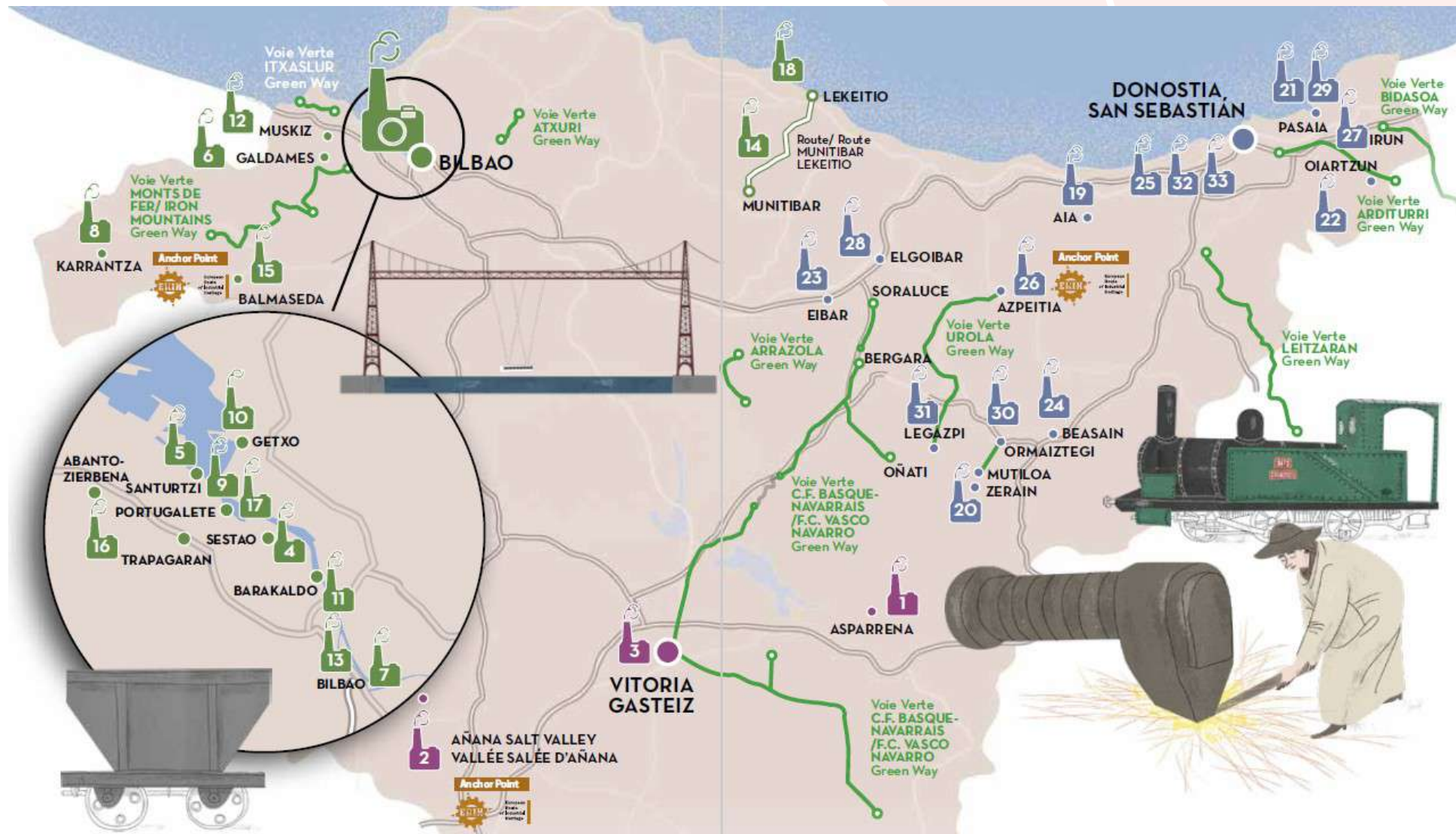


ERIH in Spain BASQUE COUNTRY

34 museums, interpretation centers and open spaces



ERIH in Spain BASQUE COUNTRY



ERIH in Spain BASQUE COUNTRY



BASQUE
INDUSTRIAL
TOURISM

The 10 green ways in the Basque Country are as follows:
Les 10 Voies Vertes d'Euskadi :



54

BASQUE COUNTRY GREEN WAYS VOIES VERTES D' EUSKADI



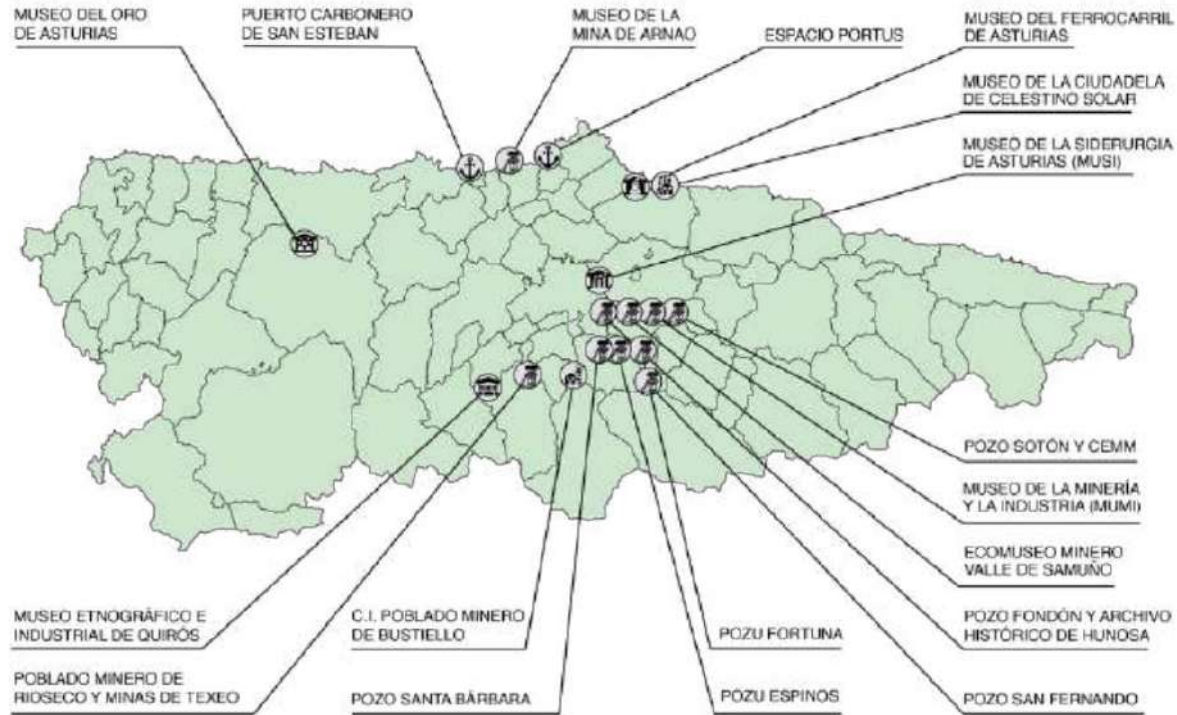
Thanks to its industrial past, back in the late 19th century, the Basque Country developed one of the densest railway networks in the whole Iberian Peninsula. This territory's difficult relief played an important role in expanding a complex network that hugged the land and connected production centres with raw material mining areas and external markets, boosting the Basque Country's socio-economic development.

Currently, the Basque Country has managed to recondition 10 Green Ways, featuring over 180 km of former train tracks which reveal the history, culture and nature of this beautiful area.

ERIH in Spain ASTURIAS

18 museums & interpretation centers

NATURALEZA
MINERA



ERIH in Spain

Greenways

Of course, there is no better way to discover the history of railways than by walking along what are now known as *vías verdes*: old railway lines turned into pedestrian or cycling paths that are not only a reminder of the route, but also, very often, still have elements or signs that are testament to their industrial origins.

Name	Start	End	Length
La Camocha (Gijón)	Mina la Camocha	Barrio de los Campomanes	7.5 km
Fuso la Reina (Oviedo)	Oviedo	Fuso la Reina	7.8 km
La Senda del Oso (Santo Adriano, Proaza, Teverga, Quirós)	Tuñón o Caranga Baxu/ Caranga de Abajo	Entragu/Entrago or Santa Marina	36.0 km
Tranqueru (Carreño)	Perlora	Xibares/Xivares	1.2 km
Valle de Turón (Mieres)	Viaducto de Reicastro in Uxo/Ujo	Paraje de La Molinera in Urbiés	14.0 km
Ferrocarril Estratégico (Carreño)	Ambás	Prevera/Pervera	9.0 km
Valle de Loredó (Mieres)	La Perea/La Pereda	La Vega San Pedro/ Vega de San Pedro	3.6 km
Rioturbio (Mieres)	Mieres del Camín/ Mieres	Returbiu/Rioturbio	3.0 km
Eo (San Tirso de Abres)	San Tiso/San Tirso de Abres	Villaodriz	12.0 km

More information:



Tranqueru Greenway



THANK YOU!!

Javier Puertas Juez
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