

## **Life after liquidation – a new reality for the mining communities**

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Europe has to face many challenges in the perspective of 20230 and 20250 transformation, and the key is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Hard coal still plays an important role in the European economy, being present in 12 EU countries and over 120 mines. The coal-energy industry concentrates thousands of people employed directly as well as indirectly related to mining, which is a significant social challenge.

For over 30 years, there has been a gradual reduction in hard coal mining capacity in Poland. In mines where resources have been exhausted, the liquidation process begins: mining operations are stopped, underground excavations and surface infrastructure are liquidated, and land reclamation takes place. At the same time, economic links with other entities are interrupted. These processes also have a very clear impact on local communities and the economy. Cities and their citizens where mining was operating must face a new reality.

Energy transition impact and efforts to limit the hard coal industry has particularly affected local communities where mining companies were the main employer. The paper presents the preliminary research results from a rural commune on the social impact of hard coal mine liquidation. Rural area development based on the operation of the mine and the effects of its closure were analyzed. The voices of the residents – both former employees and their families, as well as people not related to work in the mine. All of them are living in the rural commune in question, were considered. Preliminary research results indicate, inter alia, that citizens perceived a decline in the quality of life in the municipality, a weakening of social ties and the need for post-mining facilities development.