



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

To
remember
the past
is to create
a better
future

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“I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to our dedicated team for their hard work and efforts in making these achievements possible. I would also like to thank our supervisory board for their support and guidance throughout the year. We look forward to continuing our work in preserving the memory of the war and to make sure that its lessons are passed down to future generations. We thank you for your continued support. ”



As the Managing Director of the LRE Foundation, I am honoured to present our annual report for the year 2022. It has been a year of significant achievement for the Foundation, as we have been able to continue our mission of preserving and transmitting the memory of the Second World War. In 2022, the Foundation has organized the LRE Forum 2022 in Normandy, an occasion that brought together experts, educators, and representatives from various organizations to discuss the importance of preserving the memory of the war and its lessons. The event was a great success and provided an opportunity for attendees to meet in person for the first time after the pandemic.

One of our most notable achievements in the year was the development of the Liberation Route trails project, which included the launch of a mobile application that helps visitors navigate the historical sites related to the Second World War. We also unveiled many Vectors, including over 12 large ones, which have helped to better illustrate the historical context of the events that took place during the war.

Furthermore, the Foundation has kickstarted the 80th-anniversary campaign “Europe Remembers” to bring attention to Europe’s shared history and the importance of remembering the events of the

Second World War. The campaign aims to raise awareness about this critical period in history from 2023 – 2025.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to our dedicated team for their hard work and efforts in making these achievements possible. I would also like to thank our supervisory board for their support and guidance throughout the year.

The Foundation is committed to preserving the memory of the Second World War and to make sure that future generations understand the sacrifices made during that time. We are grateful for the support of our members, partners, as well as financial supporters such as the Vfonds, the German Foreign office and the European Union, among others.

We look forward to continuing our work in preserving the memory of the war and to make sure that its lessons are passed down to future generations. We thank you for your continued support.

Liberation Route Europe

ANNUAL REPORT 2022 – HIKING TRAILS

Liberation
Route
Europe



General Update

Following the launch of the project in 2021, the Liberation Route Europe hiking trails network has continued to grow, and 2022 saw many important additions to the transnational memorial route. The network of hiking trails, stretching from London to Berlin, now includes more than 11,000 km of walkable trails, both long and short distance. 2022 also brought the addition of smaller scale “themed routes”, a new offer for visitors exploring the trails. Additionally, important developments began towards including more countries into the Pan-European network, such as Poland and Czechia, as well as an added cycling element to offer another means for visitors to discover the route, which currently travels through the UK, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany.

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



Cultural Route of the Council of Europe

As a certified Cultural Route of the Council of Europe since 2019, in 2022 the Liberation Route Europe had its 3-year recertification process. An external assessor visited the trails in Bastogne (Belgium) in November to learn about the routes network and touristic offer. The result will be known in May 2023. She also visited the Vector of Memory in Mesch, (Belgium/Netherlands border), speaking with local stakeholders there - a successful trip with very positive feedback. In October the LREF Team attended the Annual Forum of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, in Chania, Crete (Greece). A 3-day programme of workshops, panel discussions and networking sessions; the latter provided an opportunity to speak to representatives from Ministries of Culture around Europe to further raise the visibility of the network.



JANUARY 21

Launch of new themed 'Canadian Liberation' route (Netherlands)

MAY 5

Launch of the Liberation Route Europe mobile app

MAY 9

First 'Vector of Memory' unveiled in Germany at the Peace Museum – Bridge at Remagen

MAY 23

Marketing campaign promoting new 'Forced Workers' route, Jersey (Channel Islands)

JUNE

Liberation Route Europe mobile app marketing campaign

JUNE 24

Marketing campaign promoting new themed routes in Limburg

AUGUST

Operation Market Garden marketing campaign (Netherlands)

SEPTEMBER

Several new Cross Road Vectors unveiled in Limburg, Brabant and Gelderland provinces (Netherlands)

OCTOBER

'Battle of the Scheldt' themed route launch and marketing campaign (Zeeland, Netherlands)

DECEMBER

"Battle of the Bulge" Marketing Campaign (Bastogne, Belgium)

In 2022 the LRE hiking trails network continued to grow. A new concept of “themed routes” was introduced, with 14 added to the Netherlands section of the route, 1 in Jersey, 2 in Belgium and 1 in Germany, and plans for many more to come.

Additionally, the first of the Vectors of Memory by architect Daniel Libeskind were installed, followed by another 200 across the country and others in France and Belgium. The network also confirmed plans for further expansion in Luxembourg, where a trail will span the length of the country, and in France where a southern section will be added. New plans to create the Italian section of the trail were also confirmed in 2022 and will be implemented in 2023.



United Kingdom

In 2022 the development of the LRE hiking trails network in the UK saw several key developments. In the Hampshire area the main trail has been mapped and is 199km in distance with 70 points of interest identified. With the region being a wealth of Second World War history, especially around the build-up to D-Day in 1944, many themed routes have been identified to add in alongside the main trail. In February 2023, LRE UK will start to engage with key stakeholders to map the Lincolnshire region. Feedback so far showed that the concept around education of the Second World War coupled with a sustainable tourism approach is growing and local stakeholders showed enthusiasm to be part of it. In the Channel Islands, 2022 saw the creation of a new 'Forced Workers' Themed Route highlighting the experience of labourers on the Island of Jersey.

Poland

The Liberation Route Europe project is also planned to reach Poland, and the country has a growing potential to establish a LRE branch there. In 2023, an outreach event will take place in Krakow which aims to bring together representatives of interested institutions and parties to cooperate on expanding the transnational remembrance route into Poland with trails and vectors of memory.

France

In 2022 work has been done to ensure many new developments to the LRE hiking trails in France in 2023, with the help of the now operational French branch, LRE France. A partnership with the French Hiking Federation (FFR) has already been in place since 2021. They will be in charge of developing the trails, including definition of the most suitable paths and itineraries, in cooperation with the responsible local authorities, as well as defining a global strategy for the governance of all the trails in France. The goal is to develop 1500 km of trails with themed routes in order to have at least one item of content every 2 to 5 km along the route. Numerous outreach events will be organised in 2023 with a focus on Normandy, Ile-de-France, Hauts-de-France and Great-East regions. Hopefully this will lead to the installation of the first vectors in France.

Luxembourg

An important expansion to the route in 2022 included a new cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism in Luxembourg to include the country in the hiking trails network. This partnership will enable us to add a new section to the hiking trails and highlight the rich history in the area. Proposals for the route were confirmed and work has begun to incorporate a trail which will run the length of the country, with multiple themed routes and forming an important bridge to its neighbouring countries and future routes in Belgium, Germany and France. The trails will be inaugurated around the summer 2023.





Germany

Following the creation of LRE Germany in 2022, several steps have been made to develop the LRE hiking trails projects in the country. An application was submitted to add more “hearing stones” or “audiospots” in the North Rhine-Westphalia region of Germany, and discussions continued regarding the national hiking trail route crossing the country and opportunities for its expansion. Additionally, 20 floor vectors were distributed within the area which will be installed soon.

Czechia

In Czechia, work is ongoing to build new Themed Routes in the city of Pilsen. These themed routes include topics such as the liberation of Pilsen, the Uprising of Pilsen, and the Civilian Experience. They will be an addition to the existing Liberation Route Europe and highlight the important World War Two history in the country.

Belgium

As in other countries along the route, 2022 saw the addition of new themed routes, such as the Battle of the Scheldt in the north of the country, and a route around the city of Bastogne in the Ardennes, southern Belgium. Thanks to funding from the US Embassy in Belgium, preparation also began for more themed routes in this area, such as the Peace Woods themed route, the Freedom Trail, and another around the village of Neffe. This financial support is also enabling new themed routes in Mons which will tell the stories of the American Army and the Resistance in the area. Finally, in Leopoldsborg, Flanders, a new themed route is being created for 2023.

Italy

In 2022 the development of the LRE hiking trails network in Italy saw several key developments. A Wall Vector was installed at the Memorial Museum in Borgo a Mozzano (LU), and several Floor Vectors were distributed to members. The first Floor Vectors were installed in the Cassino area (Lazio Region) and another 3 have been installed in Borgo a Mozzano (LU). In 2022, support was received from the German Embassy in Rome that allowed the development of the trails system in Italy. Thanks to this grant, another 100 Vectors have been purchased that in 2023 will be distributed to members and installed near the main historic points of interest identified along the themed routes being developed.



The Netherlands

Liberation Route Hiking Trails in the Netherlands started in 2021, with the installation of the first Vectors of Memory, including a large Remembrance Site Vector marking the Battle of Overloon. Themed routes were added in 2022, introducing walkers to major events during the final phase of the war, with nearly 200 historical sites marked with a Vector of Memory.

Liberation of Limburg

In September 2022, representatives of the oldest and youngest generations in Mesch inaugurated the «Liberation of Limburg» route to commemorate 78 years since American troops began the Netherlands' liberation. The 275 km walking route tells the province's complex liberation story, with large and small Vectors of Memory marking important events along the Liberation Route Europe. Additional Liberation Routes were created in Limburg, including the regional «Liberation of South Limburg» route and short family-friendly walking tours in Gennepe, Venlo, and Nederweert. The routes were created in cooperation with Marketing Limburg, Routebureau Noord-en Midden-Limburg, and Visit Zuid-Limburg and financially supported by vFund, the Province of Limburg, and all Limburg municipalities.

Operation Market Garden

Market Garden was one of the largest Allied operations of WW2, taking place in September 1944 in the Dutch provinces of North Brabant and Gelderland. The goal was to bypass the German defense line along the Rhine River, with nearly one hundred historic sites marked by Vectors of Memory as a lasting reminder. The 220-km route, largely following the Airborne Trail of hiking association OLAT, was completed in 2022, with short walks around Arnhem and Nijmegen. The project is a result of cooperation between many organizations, including Visit Brabant, Brabant Remembers, Toerisme Veluwe Arnhem-Nijmegen, Vrijheidsmuseum, and Airborne Museum 'Hartenstein', with financial support from Mondriaanfonds, provinces, and municipalities, among others.



Battle of the Scheldt

Freedom Ride

Cycling Routes

Podcast

What's next

The «Battle of the Scheldt» long-distance walking route was inaugurated to commemorate the Battle that took place over 78 years ago in Zeeland, western Brabant, and northern Belgium. The 450-km route runs on both sides of the Westerschelde estuary, passing through Antwerp and telling the story of one of the largest military operations during World War II on Dutch soil. Dozens of Vectors of Memory mark important events, with more to be added in the coming years.

The project is a collaboration between the LRE Foundation and Erfgoed Zeeland, supported by vfund and the Province of Zeeland. With support from many tourism organisations, WWII heritage and governments, the Liberation Route Europe walking network in the Netherlands is being further expanded. Including a national and regional route «In the Footsteps of the Canadian Liberators». The first cycling routes will also follow in 2023, with a special place for the route “In the Footsteps of the Polish Liberators” throughout the Netherlands.

The sixth edition of the Freedom Ride started in Apeldoorn in 2022. On National Liberation Day, some 1,000 cyclists sportingly paused to remember our freedom. The liberation festival bike ride passed places that commemorate WWII and remind us of the value of freedom. During an impressive ceremony at the Dutch War Cemetery in Loenen, all participants laid a flower at the monument. LRE Foundation traditionally co-organises the Freedom Ride.



In 2023, the website and mobile app will introduce a new way for users to interact with Liberation Route Europe : cycling routes.

In collaboration with cycling institutions throughout Europe, we are selecting and constructing a network of road segments and themed routes that will allow our audience to take a bike trip along the Liberation Route Europe.

In 2022, the LRE Foundation kicked off the collaboration with the audio production company 'Natif' (Lille, France) to create a podcast series as part of the Liberation Route Europe project. This initiative was driven by the ambition to add a new component to the current Liberation Route digital and audio offer, which includes more than 1300 points of interest and stories displayed on a web planner, mobile app, audio-spots etc.

The podcast series, still at its initial stage, will include short to medium lengths episodes that will offer the listeners exciting insights, stories, and curiosities of events and places linked to WWII history and several Liberation Route remembrance sites. The podcast aims to enrich the experience of those hiking along the trails and those browsing from the comfort of their homes and will make WWII history even more relevant and accessible to the younger generations.

Promotional Videos



In 2022 the marketing campaign for the Liberation Route Europe hiking trails continued, with promotional videos highlighting the paths and storylines of several countries along the route to inspire visitors to explore it themselves. Through the eyes of a selection of different characters, the videos travelled to the Scheldt area of the Netherlands and Belgium (Zeeland, West-Brabant, Antwerp/ Flanders) to discover the Battle of the Scheldt, and to Italy (Milan, Rome, Bologna) to uncover the stories along the Italian trails. One was also produced for Lincolnshire in the UK.

View the Liberation Route Europe promotional videos via the LRE Foundation's [YouTube channel](#) or the QR code.



Support

The development of this route was made possible with the cooperation and support of the following hiking organisations across Europe:



Throughout 2022, various partners, regional authorities, and governments have decided to support the realisation of the Liberation Route hiking trails.

Grant from the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany – The Hague & Rome

The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany has been supporting the development of the Liberation Route Europe hiking trails project since 2020. In 2022, their continued support enabled developments to begin on regional proposals made in 2021. The creation of historical content and planning for new routes began in five areas: Southern England, France, Belgium, Luxembourg and Italy. Additionally, 350 floor 'Vectors of Memory' were manufactured to be distributed to members and partners along the route. Finally, multiple outreach events were organised for early 2023 in Belgium, Northern France, Poland, Germany, Netherlands and England, to raise awareness to the hiking trails network and expand membership.

 Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany
The Hague

 Ambasciata della Repubblica Federale di Germania
Roma



Mondriaan Fonds

2020 – 2022 Operation Market Garden Trail

The Mondriaan Fonds provided the LRE Foundation with a project grant to further develop the Operation Market Garden trail as part of the Liberation Route Europe with historical content and 'Vectors of Memory', from the Belgian border through the province of North-Brabant to the Arnhem–Nijmegen region.

Our partners Visit Brabant, Visit Brabant Routebureau, Brabant Remembers, Airborne Region as well as Tourism Veluwe Arnhem Nijmegen helped us to do so.



Province of Gelderland

2021-2022 Vectors of Memory

A few years ago the Province of Gelderland provided a subsidy for improvement of audio spots in Gelderland (the first were launched in 2008). This grant was used to integrate the most iconic WWII sites in Gelderland into our hiking trails network. Six sites were marked with a 'Vector of Memory' and included in the travel planner.



vfonds

2020-2022, Battle of the Scheldt and Liberation of Limburg

Thanks to the financial support of the vfonds (Dutch Foundation for Peace, Freedom and Veteran Support), the LRE Foundation in cooperation with Marketing Limburg, Routebureau Noord-en Midden- Limburg, Visit Zuid-Limburg and Erfgoed Zeeland launched themed routes and 'Vectors of Memory' in the Dutch provinces of Zeeland and Limburg.

2022-2023, Follow in the Footsteps of the Canadian Liberators

The vfund also supports the first national themed route in the Netherlands. With dozens of partners LRE Foundation is working on a 'Canadian route' that crosses from the south to the north and tells the often underexposed story of the Canadian liberators. With several regional routes, it will be launched in 2023.



National Lottery Belgium

Thanks to funding from the National Lottery in Belgium, in 2022 work started on developing new themed routes in all parts of Belgium. This includes further developments of the website and application, addition of new content and themed routes, and communication tools. The new additions will be launched in 2023.

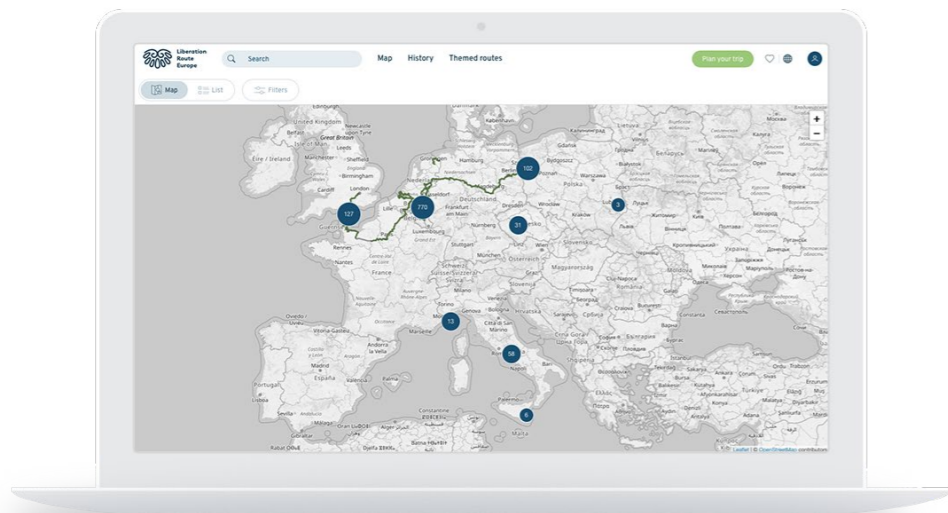


The Ministry of Tourism Luxembourg

The Ministry of Economy and its directorate general for tourism have decided to join forces with the LRE Foundation to develop the trails concept in the Great Duchy, combining stories about the liberation of the country in September 1944 and the Battle of the Bulge of the winter 1944-1945, the second occupation and liberation.



Website



Launched in May 2021, this innovative website presents more than a thousand locations and stories in six languages (English, French, Dutch, German, Polish, and Italian).

The Liberation Route Europe Website received nearly **2 million page views** and **420.000 unique users** in 2022. More than **1300 people registered** for the Liberation Route Europe website and mobile app and **2500 trips** were created.

WEBSITE INSIGHTS

- 420 K USERS
- 35 K + UNIQUE USERS PER MONTH
- 4.5 K + NEW PAGES

Social Media

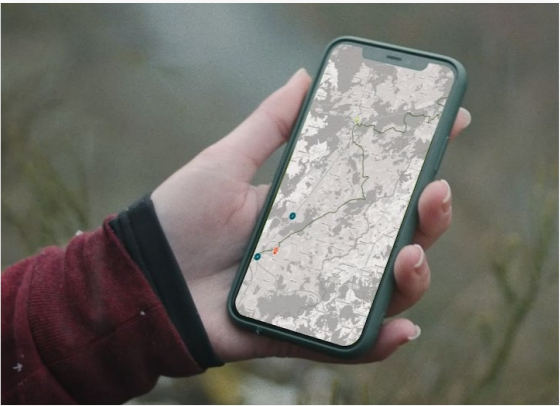
The Liberation Route Europe social media are used to promote the route and to inform our followers on a weekly basis. On our channels we showcase various WWII stories, museums, remembrance sites, and points of interest throughout Europe, by sharing videos, pictures and information about our members and partners.

SOCIAL MEDIA INSIGHTS 2021

- 13.6 M IMPRESSIONS
- 11 M REACH
- 100 K + ENGAGEMENT
- 5000 + MENTIONS
- 1.1 M VIDEO VIEWS + 30 SECS (FACEBOOK)

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

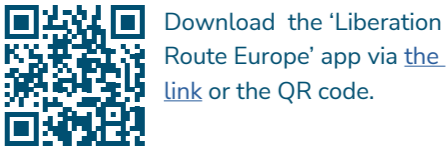
- 36790 (+12 %)
- 2694 (+8%)



Application

APPLICATION INSIGHTS

- 5000 + DOWNLOADS
- 2000 + UNIQUE USERS PER MONTH
- 30 + DAILY USERS



Download the 'Liberation Route Europe' app via [the link](#) or the QR code.



39
45

EUROPE REMEMBERS

80 YEARS
AFTER WWII

Introduction

In the years 2023, 2024 and 2025, Europe will commemorate and remember the 80th anniversary of the progressive liberation of Europe from the Nazi regime occupation. From the invasion of Sicily in July 1943 to the capitulation's signature on 8 May 1945, the liberation process took many forms but spread over most of the European continent. The Europe Remembers campaign is the initiative created by the LRE Foundation to contribute to this effort of commemoration and remembrance.

Europe Remembers

Europe Remembers is an awareness campaign set up for the 75th anniversary of the end of the war, by the LRE Foundation, in partnership with many organisations across several European countries. Despite the pandemic's interference, this campaign has been an enormous success, with many lessons learnt. The LRE Foundation has therefore decided to maintain this platform in the years after the 75th anniversary and maintain the project's legacy. With the 80th anniversary on the horizon, the project is now back on, with some adaptations but with the same ambition and objectives.

- April 2022 1. PROJECT INITIATION AND DEFINITION
- Sept. 2022 2. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT, PARTNERSHIP AND FUNDING
- July 2023 3. PROJECT EXECUTION
- From July 4. EVALUATION

COMMEMORATE AND HONOUR

All who lost their lives and pay tribute to the veterans.

INSPIRE THE PUBLIC

Especially the youth, to become acquainted with the international route and the events, exhibitions and commemorations surrounding 80 years of freedom. Ultimately raising awareness of the last phase of WWII and remembrance sites where we can all experience our shared and individual histories.

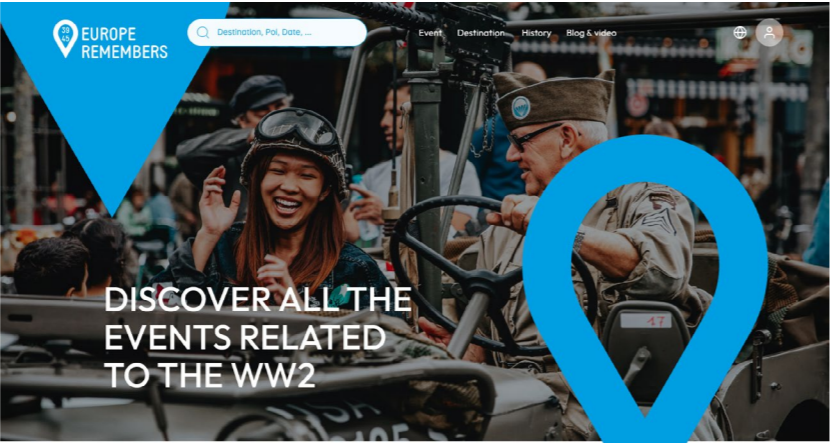
REFLECT ON THE LESSONS OF THE PAST

The legacies of the war, the value of peace, reconciliation and freedom, and learn about history from different perspectives.

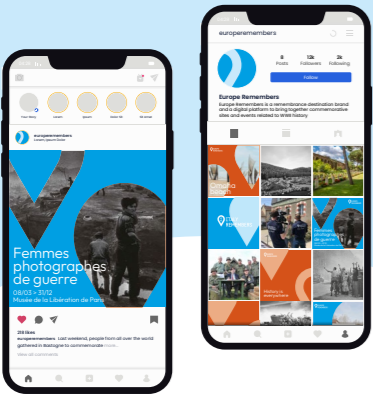
Project Outline



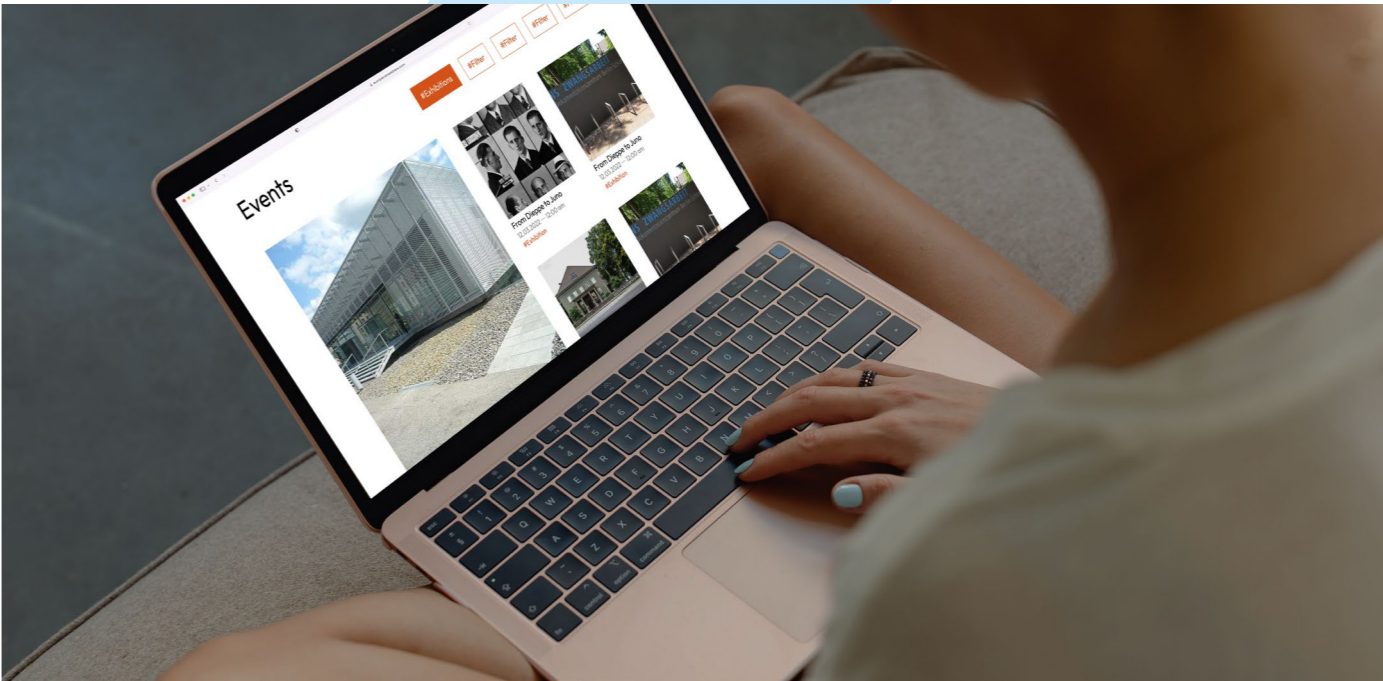
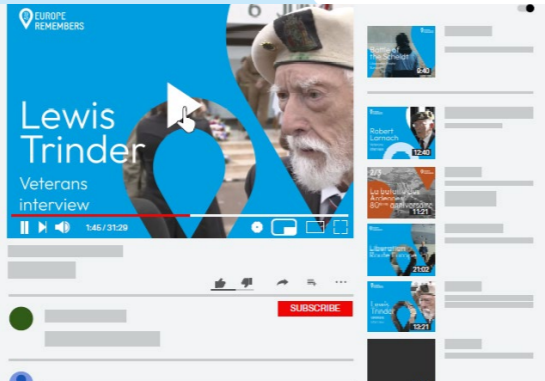
The Europe Remembers basic concept is the flexibility of the brand. From the original logo, different aspects can be modified.



An online platform, promoting events, destinations, and visits, as well as sharing stories. This is a collaborative environment for partners to contribute to.



Awareness campaigns, including social media, online promotion, activation campaign and video production.



The online platform and collaborative approach

The project's website europe remembers.com will be a revamped version of the current platform dating from 2018. The user experience and content hierarchy will be reviewed and offer a more engaging approach.

The key entry point for the website will be the **events** (commemorations, temporary exhibitions, festivals, conferences etc.), which form the core aspect of the information people are looking for and might struggle to find juggling different websites and languages. The Europe Remembers project team will make a regular inventory of events, but the most important aspect of this work is to be collaborative. Partners will be asked to contribute to filling in the database by registering on the platform and adding their events themselves. In case of a large amount, other methods can be used too. The creation of API links can also help to feed the platform with regularly updated content. A special attention will be made to the events organised by the co-initiators of the campaign.

The website will also contain a wide range of information regarding the **destinations** and remembrance sites that can be visited (museums, battlefields, cemeteries, fortifications, monuments etc.). Over a thousand sites are already in the database, and more are continuously added.

Historical content is also an essential component of the platform. Storylines, stories, and biographies help understand the context and history, and share personal accounts that embody this history (the content of Europe Remembers is connected to that of the Liberation Route Europe, for a sustainable use).

The Europe Remembers initiative is led by the LRE Foundation, which invites all institutions involved in organising events or projects related to the 80th anniversary to participate. There are different possible roles and levels of involvement which can be discussed with the LRE team.

Projects & events

In the first half of 2022, three youth events were held as part of the EASTory through their Eyes project, funded by the European Commission Programme: Europe for Citizens.

The third edition of the LRE “Through Their Eyes” project officially started in 2022 as part of the EU-funded CERV-Programme, with the theme of persecution during the Second World War.



EASTory through their Eyes

Students from Krakow, Pilsen and Bastogne met at partner locations to explore and discuss the multi-perspective approach to history and some of the biographies featured in the exhibition prepared as the result of this project. The meetings provided the invaluable opportunity to hear first-hand stories told by eyewitnesses and to take part in artistic activities that enhanced the mutual exchange of experiences between young Eastern and Western Europeans.



Persecution through their Eyes

The project consortium consists of the LRE Foundation, Camp Vught National Memorial (the Netherlands), Buchenwald and Mittelbau-Dora Memorials Foundation (Germany), LRE Italia association, the National Peace Park of Sant'Anna di Stazzema (Italy), and „Grodzka Gate - NN Theatre“ Centre in Lublin (Poland). The project implementation is underway based on the preparation of both physical and digital exhibitions, which will be available in 2023, along with accompanying youth events.



History Treks

At the beginning of May, twenty-seven Dutch and German university students took part in the “History Treks – Promoting European Citizenship and Sustainability along the Liberation Route Europe” project. This initiative, part of the LRE Youth Programme array, was co-organised by LRE NRW and funded thanks to an Erasmus+ grant.

As part of this five day experience, students visited some of the most important sites linked to WWII history and remembrance and reflected on the different perspectives of WWII history and the long-lasting consequences for Germany and the Netherlands.



WWII Dutch Museum Campaign

For the third year in a row, the Dutch organization of WWII-museums and memorial centers SMH 40-45 and the LRE Foundation organised a national campaign. The aim of this annual campaign was to raise awareness of the affiliated WWII heritage institutions in the Netherlands.

This time, everything was done online via Facebook and Instagram. In the run-up to the Christmas break, the emphasis was on encouraging parents to take their (12+) children to a museum or memorial center as an interesting and educational trip.

From the beginning of December to the beginning of January, the campaign consisted of social ads with a short text and a link to the campaign website <https://www.tweedewereldoorlog.nl/wo2-musea-uitgelicht/>. In the end, 775000 people (unique visitors) were reached, as well as double the number of views (brand awareness) and over 400 click-throughs.



Activities from Foundation's national branches

LRE United Kingdom



The LRE UK continued to grow during 2022, with many efforts to make new contacts and build the network further, resulting in an increase in awareness for both the LREF and LRE UK.

Early in 2023, outreach events will be taking place to continue with the development of the network and also the hiking trails, engaging with museums, memorials, hiking and cycling organisations, and encouraging further public engagement with both the organisation and its projects.

LRE Germany

The association Liberation Route Germany e.V. was finally registered in the district court in 2022 and later acknowledged as a non-profit organization. The board first considered and approved a mission statement.

In Groesbeek, a seminar on the idea of liberation was held to analyze the various interpretations and points of view attached to it while contrasting the various strategies used in the Netherlands and Germany. To be able to function on a global scale inside the LRE network, it is crucial to comprehend the term «liberation».

At the same, an application for additional audio spots in North Rhine-Westphalia was submitted, foundations for the Hiking Trail project's routes were laid, and preparations were made for participation in the «Europe Remembers 80 Years» project.

Twenty floor vectors were distributed, and some membership recruitment initiatives were launched.

In addition, the exhibition «History Through Their Eyes» was presented in two cities, and a distribution strategy for the exhibition was devised.

LRE Italy

LRE Italy was involved in numerous events in 2022, mostly carried out to promote LRE, extend the network of members and improve the historical content of the site, intended as a source of information on our activities and a true channel for visitors and members to learn about the history and plan small or long excursions.

The main project we were involved in was Liberation Route Europe's Trails in Italy- project financed by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Rome – started on the 1st of September 2022 until the 31st of December 2022.

The Liberation Route Europe's trails in Italy is the Italian set of activities which complete and feed the international LRE's Trails project.

Three outreach events were organised at the Tuscany Region in Florence, the Shoah Museum in Rome and the Emilia Romagna Region in Florence.

The support of the Scientific Committee was helpful to develop high-quality historical content (for all online and offline publication), including storylines, remembrance sites and personal stories / biographies, with a multi-perspective approach.

In 2022, the first Vectors were placed in Italy. A Wall Vector was installed at the entrance of the new Museum of Memory and the Gothic Line in Borgo a Mozzano, while some Floor Vectors were installed in some places of great significance in Cassino. The installation of Vectors will continue in the other regions of our members.



DE WEG NAAR VRIJHEID:
LIBERATION ROUTE

FEBRUARI 8, 2023 / SANDRA EN MONIQUE

Op weg naar vrijheid

Met de weg naar de vrijheid in ons hoofd beginnen we de voorbereiding van dit #40PlusVriendinnen_WieKentDe in het teken van de Liberation Route. Het is zalig om rond te struinen op dit thema en juist daar de bijzondere fotografische plekken te ontdekken. We vinden het spannend en beseffen maar half wat er te zien en te beleven is vandaag de dag. De geschiedenis is een verhaal dat je kent in grote lijnen, maar er zijn nog zoveel meer verhalen die ook nu de vrijheid nog in je hoofd kunnen brengen. We genieten dus al volop van deze voorbereiding.



Op de kaart.

We verzamelen dit WieKentDe bij de sluis in Grave, waar het prachtige erfgoed onze camera's al roept. Het avontuur roept ook! Op de kaart van de Liberation Route hebben we bij de sluis een audiopunt gespot. Eens kijken of we ons gezelschap stil kunnen krijgen met een van de verhalen. Gelukt! We worden er zelf ook stil van.



Right after the Covid-period was over in April 2022 LREF organised a FAM trip for some tour operators and two journalists from the US and Canada. Claire Barrett from HistoryNet will come up with a travel piece on D-Day that will run in their WWII magazine this spring. Editor Aaron Kylie is working on a Liberation Route feature article for Legion Magazine that will be published in their March / April issue.

Leveraging the historical commemorative moments, the LREF also conducted news media outreach activities to present the Liberation Route Europe hiking trails in the different countries. There was also limited success with social media influencers. In 2022 LREF has collaborated with a group of Dutch bloggers ('40plus vriendinnen') in a pilot programme who, after hiking along the Liberation Route in Gelderland, produced social media content, pictures and a blog article to present the trails to their audience. A first but very successful collaboration that sets a positive precedent for future communication and marketing activities with bloggers and influencers to promote the Liberation Route Europe hiking trails.

Media Coverage

In 2022, there were nearly 200 mentions in the press about the Foundation's activities, projects and national branches.

A lot of media attention was dedicated to the development of the Liberation Route in Italy and the unveiling of new Vectors of Memory in the Netherlands



Travel PRESSentation

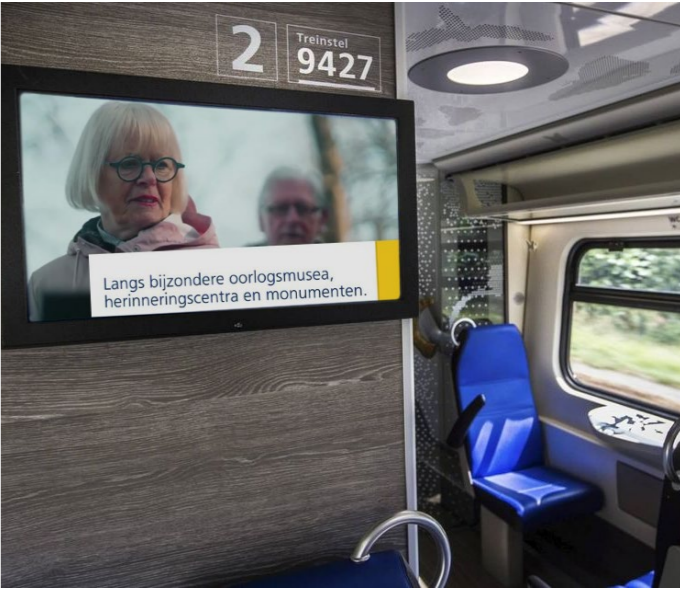
To further outreach of digital and offline media, in November, the LRE Foundation was present at the TravelPRESSentation, the largest network meeting for tourism media in the Netherlands. This gave us the possibility to meet with over twenty travel journalists, bloggers and influencers and to present the wide range of regional and thematic storylines along the Liberation Route Europe. It was an extremely efficient and practical way to share information, make further agreements, and explore possible collaborations.



NS Campaign

For the second year in a row, the Foundation sustained a partnership with the Dutch railway-operator 'Nederlandse Spoorwegen'. Promotional videos displaying the Liberation Route Europe hiking trails were played on the wagon screens.

This was an amazing opportunity to showcase the Liberation Route initiative to many people visiting the Netherlands or commuting across the country.



In 2022, as in-person events once again returned to the industry, the LRE Foundation continued to build strong relationships with the travel trade industry. Attending several in-person events to build the network of contacts and promote the Liberation Route Europe hiking trails as a sustainable touristic offer, the team marked several successes throughout the year.

In 2022, the LREF Team attended the following events:

EUROPEAN TRAVEL MARKET

In March LREF participated in an online B2B networking event connecting North American tour operators, wholesalers and travel advisors with European tourism suppliers. We've had meetings with 15 tour operators from Canada and the USA that were seriously interested in our activities, especially the Liberation Route Europe hiking trails.



CYCLE SUMMIT 2022

In October, the LREF Team attended the biggest Cycle Summit event yet, in Chambéry (France), hosted by Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Tourism, and met with more than 20 tour operators specialised in hiking and cycling tourism.



ETOA GEM

In November the LREF Team met with around 25 international tour operators in London, presenting the Liberation Route Europe and raising the profile of the project in the sector.



WTM LONDON

In November, the team took part in the World Travel Market in London, met with numerous tourism boards, tour operators and media, to promote our ongoing and future project.



Established cooperation with Tour Operators

In February as part of our LRE Forum in Normandy LREF organised a FAM trip for tour operators from the US and Canada. In cooperation with the European Travel Commission (ETC), which took care of the flights, seven tour operators and two journalists travelled along the Liberation Route in France, Belgium and the Netherlands for one week.

After a hard period due to Covid-19 it was the first possibility for the tour operators to explore new opportunities for their tours. They really appreciated the programme with the sites, museums and members we visited. In the end four of them were so inspired that they became a member of LREF:

- Georgia Hardy Tours (Canada): educational travel and custom tours for schools, organizations, families, and lifelong learners of all ages.



- Miracolo Tours (USA): they strive to make each trip a meaningful and unique experience.



- Connection Custom Travel / The Battlefield Tours of Canada: a hands-on tour operator - dedicated to creating custom experiences, tailor made with the interests & goals in mind, for travellers across Canada.



- Travelmeister (USA): specialised in custom European tours, among others World War II tours.



Guide network

LREF has established a guide project to recruit and train battlefield guides to interpret the Liberation Route heritage to visitors from across the world. The LRE Guides Network ensures quality of WWII tours and makes LREF visible on the ground. Many visits by press and travel trade stakeholders have been accompanied by LRE Guides. Last year we held several online guide meetings, during which guest speakers were invited to update the LRE guides.

LREXPO

In 2022 the LREXPO took place on 5 April in Caen, Normandy (France), as part of the LRE Forum jointly hosted by the LRE Foundation, Normandy Tourism and the Region of Normandy. Professionals from across the international travel trade industry gathered to network with members and partners of the LRE Foundation. One-to-one networking appointments enabled representatives from remembrance sites, museums, tourism destinations and travel and tourism stakeholders, to explore unique travel offers and partnerships.

A FAM trip for international tour operators was organised together with the European Travel Commission (co-funded by the European Union). Around ten tour operators from the US and Canada continued the guided tour from Normandy to Belgium and the Netherlands.



LRE FORUM



The LRE Foundation's annual event took place from 3-6 April in Normandy, a region rich in WWII history and cultural heritage. The 2022 edition of the LRE Forum, co-organised with Normandy Region and Normandy Tourism, was a multi-day event composed of several activities that brought together an array of international members and partners of the organising institutions and tourism stakeholders from across the World War II remembrance sector.

The event opened its doors with a welcome reception at the Juno Beach Centre in Courseulles-sur-Mer, a long-time valuable member of the Foundation.

On 4 April, the LRE Forum continued with the Member Seminar, where members were walked through the organisation's latest updates and projects and took the stage to share some of their best practices with the network. The morning event ended with a thematic session about the importance of being part of a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe.

In the afternoon, the LRE Conference welcomed a large audience of around 220 participants from across Normandy, Europe, and North America. The event opened with the keynote speech by Alain Lamassoure, former Minister and Member of the European Parliament, Chairman of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (Council of Europe), on the topic: 'Teaching and learning history in Europe: an instrument of Peace?'

Afterwards the selection of academic speakers and experts contemplated the role of the remembrance sector within modern society and its potential as a tool for education.

In the evening, the LRE Gala dinner at the stunning Abbaye aux Dames in Caen has been a delightful occasion to present the new members and network.

The LRE Forum 2022 continued on 5 April with the annual thematic trade show, the LREXPO, which allowed numerous travel trade stakeholders, Foundation members, and Normandy partners to connect and showcase their destinations to international tour operators.

Site visits organised in collaboration with Normandy Tourism wrapped up the LRE Forum 2022.

New Members 2022

ITALY



Tuscany Region



**Associazione
Movimento Tellurico**



Municipality of Milan



**Emilia-Romagna
Region**



**Municipality of
Piacenza**



**Comitato Regionale per
le Onoranze ai Caduti
di Marzabotto**



Municipality of Montese

UNITED STATES



Miracolo Tours

CANADA



Georgia Hardy Tours



**Connection Custom Travel
/ Battlefield Tours of Canada**

LUXEMBOURG

Ministry of Economy
General Directorate for
Tourism



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Ministère de l'Économie

NETHERLANDS

**Frisian Resistance
Museum**



BELGIUM

**Tourist Office Heart
of the Ardennes**



FRANCE

City of Calais



**Urban Community of
Caen la Mer**



La Coupole



POLAND

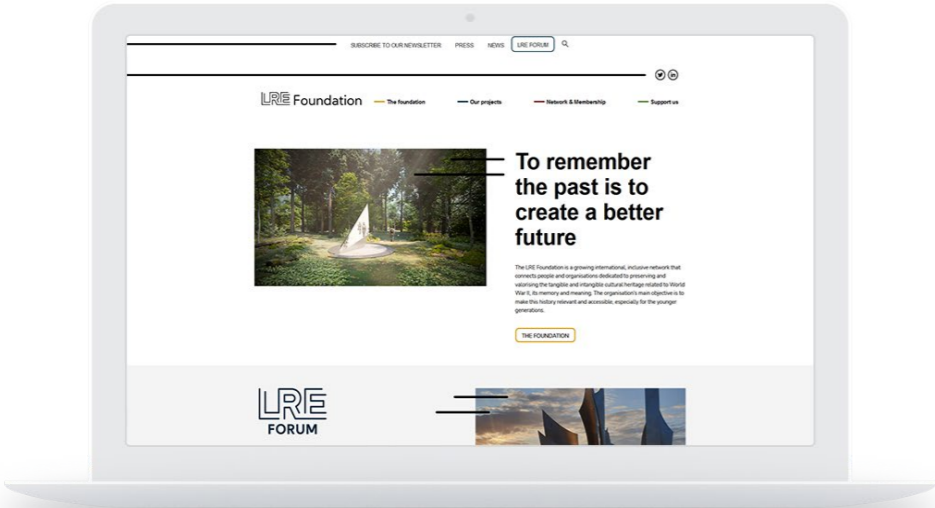
Home Army Museum



**The “Grodzka Gate –
NN Theatre” Centre**



Website



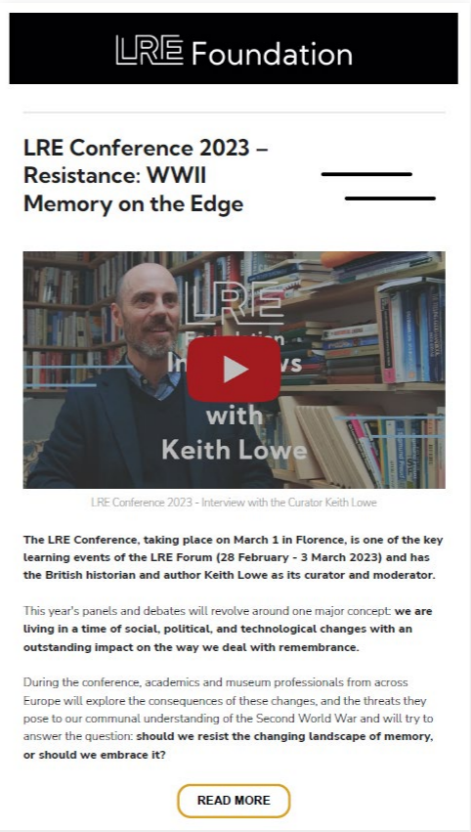
The LRE Foundation website reflects the organisation’s identity and provides a detailed record of the Foundation’s activities and projects. Through 2022, both the newsroom and the project pages have been implemented to convey all the latest news and updates about the Foundation’s network, branches and initiatives.

www.lre-foundation.org

WEBSITE INSIGHTS

7800 + UNIQUE VISITORS IN 2022

Newsletters



The LRE Foundation newsletter is a regular appointment for all LREF Members and Partners, as well as all organizations and individuals interested in our project. Shared on a monthly basis, it is a convenient way to keep track of all our activities and updates.

NEWSLETTER INSIGHTS

30 K + EMAILS SENT IN 2022

3426 + SUBSCRIBERS

10 NEWSLETTERS PER YEAR



Sign up for the 'LRE Foundation' newsletter via the link or QR code.

Social Media

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

3157 (+1.8%)

1247 (+1.3%)

In the coming year, we will work with members and governments to develop the Liberation Route Europe hiking trails and to expand the LRE Network into new regions.

Forum 2023

In collaboration with LRE Italy, Region Tuscany, and Toscana Promozione, the LRE Forum 2023 will be held in Florence (Italy) from February 28th to March 3rd.

The LREF annual event will bring together members, partners and tourism stakeholders for a variety of activities, including engaging panel discussions about WWII history and memory transmission, as well as networking opportunities and site visits to local memorials and museums. The edition is great way to highlight the unique Italian perspective and the region and war heritage of Tuscany.

Resistance through their Eyes

Next year, the EU-funded project Resistance through their Eyes will be launched with the LRE Foundation, the Resistance Museum (Netherlands), the Home Army Museum (Poland), the White Rose Foundation (Germany), the City of Milan and the Ferruccio Parri National Institute (Italy) onboard. The project partners will focus on a multi-perspective broad spectrum of resistance experiences in Europe from 1939 to 1945 and beyond.

LRE France

LRE France has been operating as the LRE Foundation's new operational branch since early January.

In order to encourage the diffusion of WWII remembrance in France, LRE France will engage with the LRE Foundation to create new initiatives and broaden the French network. LRE France seeks to launch joint initiatives and intends to represent all organizations in France with comparable interests. By launching this new branch, increasing awareness of it, planning various outreach activities, and establishing new collaborations, 2023 will be a great year.

Europe Remembers

See page 20-23.

LRE National Branches and Offices

LRE France is the newest operational branche of the LRE Foundation and is up and running since the beginning of January 2023. It is related to the strategic development of the LRE Foundation with the creation of a tight network of organizations working as closely as possible with our members on the ground. It is an essential contribution to the development of the LRE network and of its projects, especially the French sections of the Liberation Route.

The LRE Foundation is currently working on the development of a branche organization in Poland in 2023. With the current and Krakow based team members, a strategic and organizational plan is being set up to reach this important goal, which will deepen the multiperspective DNA of the LREF.

Jurriaan de Mol, Honorary Chairman of the LRE Foundation

The LRE Foundation is overjoyed and proud to announce the recent appointment of Jurriaan de Mol, our former Deputy Director, as Honorary Chairman of the LRE Foundation.

From initiator of the Liberation Route Europe in 2007 to Chairman, driving force, Project Manager, and Deputy Director - Jurriaan de Mol has been involved in the creation and work of the LRE Foundation since its beginnings.



“After all those years, 15 years, I am still very excited and moved by the fact that the team of Liberation Route Europe is still working today on enlarging the trail from Southern England to Berlin but also the trails in southern Europe and more. This is a big achievement. [...] People love to walk, and people are very interested in the stories that happened nearly 80 years ago – so yes, it is fantastic how we started and how far we got today.”

– Jurriaan de Mol

Honorary Chairman of the LRE Foundation

Team



Managing Director
Rémi Praud
r.praud@liberationroute.com



Project Manager
Emerald Johnson
e.johnson@liberationroute.com



Digital Manager
Loïc François
l.francois@liberationroute.com



Communications Manager
Cecilia Badano
c.badano@liberationroute.com



Program Manager
Peter Kruk
p.kruk@liberationroute.com



Press & Communications Advisor
Gert-Jan Jacobs
gj.jacobs@liberationroute.com



Project Manager
Joël Stoppels
j.stoppels@liberationroute.com



Historian
Jory Brentjens
j.brentjens@liberationroute.com



Managing Director Italy
Carlo Puddu
c.puddu@liberationroute.com



Managing Director United Kingdom
Ben Mayne
b.mayne@liberationroute.com



Managing Director NRW
Gotthard Kirch
gotthard.kirch@web.de



Managing Director France
Isabelle Lebreton
i.lebreton@liberationroute.com



Executive Marketing Manager Italy
Katia Gerunda
k.gerunda@liberationroute.com



Project Manager
Joanna Roman
j.roman@liberationroute.com



Project Assistant
Wout van Aalst
w.vanaalst@liberationroute.com



Finance Manager
Jocelyn Bolluijt
j.bolluijt@liberationroute.com



info@liberationroute.com
www.lre-foundation.org

The Netherlands

Jansbuitensingel 30
6811 AE, Arnhem
+31 (0) 30 200 6834

Belgium

131 Rue de Stassart
1050 Brussels
+32 (0) 25800733

Italy

Castello di Porta San Donato
Nuova Mura Urbane
55100 Lucca (LU)

North Rhine Westphalia

An der Laag 4
52396 Heimbach

United Kingdom

71 Queen Victoria St.
London EC4V 4AY

France

Région Normandie – Service Tourisme
Abbaye-aux-Dames
Pl. Reine Mathilde CS 50523
14035 Caen

