



# THE CITIES OF REMEMBRANCE NETWORK

PRESENTATION OF THE NETWORK,  
ITS ACTIONS AND ITS PERSPECTIVES

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## CREATION OF

# "CITIES OF REMEMBRANCE NETWORK"



The two great global conflicts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have left indelible marks on the collective heritage and memory of the people of Dunkirk. Devastated in 1945, the city recovered with strength, courage and tenacity, just like other cities in Europe and around the world.

At a time when nationalists, responsible for this mass destruction, are currently seeing a rise in power unprecedented since the end of the Second World War, the Greater Dunkirk Council has taken the initiative to bring together cities that, like Dunkirk, have been able to rise above after having seen the chaos of war and have been partially or fully destroyed during the two world wars.

Coming from France, Europe and around the globe, the participants of the Cities of Remembrance network came together for the first time at an international symposium in Dunkirk on 27 May 2016.

The following editions in Volgograd in 2017, Rostock in 2018 and Dunkirk again in 2019 have all formed part of a renewed ambition to enhance our cities' memory, in an approach that is simultaneously historic, memorial and social, cultural and economic. It is this same collective and unanimous desire to remember that will once again guide the 2024 symposium in Oradour-sur-Glane, commemorating 80 years since the population of this martyred village was massacred during the Second World War.

How have our cities reconstructed themselves? What role do these tragic episodes play in our territories' identities? How do we tackle the question of remembrance tourism? What message of peace should we deliver to future generations? These are all questions that the representatives of the Cities of Remembrance are invited to answer collectively during the events making up these annual symposia. Questions in which citizens, and young people in particular, are also encouraged to participate through the creation of artistic projects or international exchanges.

The brochure presented to you today aims to present each of these incredibly resilient cities, as well as the projects led by their citizens and representatives.

**Patrice Vergriete**

Minister for Transport  
President of the Greater Dunkirk Council

# MAP OF REMEMBRANCE CITIES

Bizerte *TUNISIA*  
 Bucha *UKRAINE* – associate city  
 Caen *FRANCE*  
 Coventry *UNITED KINGDOM*  
 Dunkirk *FRANCE* – 2016 and 2019 symposia  
 Gdansk *POLAND*  
 Guernica *SPAIN*  
 Hiroshima *JAPAN* – member of the Mayors for Peace network  
 Hwaseong *SOUTH KOREA*  
 Krefeld *GERMANY*

Le Havre *FRANCE*  
 Oradour-sur-Glane *FRANCE* – 2024 symposium  
 Ouistreham *FRANCE*  
 Rostock *GERMANY* – 2018 symposium  
 Saint-Nazaire *FRANCE*  
 Saint Petersburg *RUSSIA*  
 Szczecin *POLAND*  
 Volgograd *RUSSIA* – 2017 symposium  
 Ypres *BELGIUM*

*\*before the Russian-Ukrainian conflict of February 2022*





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**ID CARD**



Country  
**Tunisia**

Mayor  
**Kamel BEN AMARA** (2018-2022)

Secretary General  
**Imen ZOUAOUI**

Inhabitants  
**350,000 (urban area)**

Surface area  
**34 km<sup>2</sup> (city)**

Main sectors of activity  
**Agriculture, industry, tourism, port activities**

**PRESENTATION OF THE CITY**

Bizerte, located in the north of Tunisia, was founded around 1100 BCE by the Phoenicians under the name of A'Kra, before falling under the influence of Carthage during the Punic Wars in the 3rd century BCE. The city would then come under Roman rule, followed by the Arabs in the 6th century, the Ottoman empire in 1547 and, finally, French rule in 1878 with the Treaty of Berlin.

Upon the outbreak of the Second World War, the city was one of the most important military ports in the Mediterranean. This exceptional infrastructure and the strategic location of its base did not go unnoticed by the Axis forces (Japan, Germany and Italy). The base was captured by Axis forces on 7 December 1942, following an ultimatum delivered by the Germans, threatening to destroy the city's military and civil infrastructure. The Allies then made it a priority target of their bombing, destroying more civil targets than military. Three quarters of the city were destroyed and the population fled

the city, taking refuge near Tunis. The city was recaptured by the Americans on 7 May 1943, with its reconstruction quickly planned.

Tunisia became independent in 1956. In 1963, France ceded the military base of Bizerte, a major event marking the final episode in Tunisia's journey to independence. The city has paid dearly for this final combat, leaving behind hundreds of wounded and dead, though this has not prevented its economic recovery, geared towards port and tourist activities.

Every year, 5,537 million tonnes of goods pass through its port, mainly headed towards Europe. Bizerte also aims to establish itself as a Mediterranean yachting metropolis, thanks to its attractive tourism policy.

Though the city is packed with history and remains a highly symbolic place of remembrance, there is still much at stake to affirm this status within the public space.



©Flickr - Houses of Oireachtas



©Facebook, Anatolii Fedoruk Mayor of Bucha

## ID CARD



Country  
**Ukraine**

Mayor  
**Anatolij FEDORUK**

Inhabitants  
**53,190**

Surface area  
**26.58 km<sup>2</sup>**

Main sectors of activity  
**Energy engineering,  
food industry**

## PRESENTATION OF THE CITY

Bucha is located 30 km north-west of the centre of Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine. It obtained city status on 1 January 2007.

During the Second World War, on the eve of the German troops' arrival in Kyiv (December 1943), the command post of the first Ukrainian front – led by army general Vatutin – was located in Bucha.

In the 1950s, Bucha's economy thrived, thanks to the installation of large mechanised peat bogs, a sawmill, a glassworks and a starch and molasses factory, as well as a secondary school, a 500-seat theatre and a cinema.

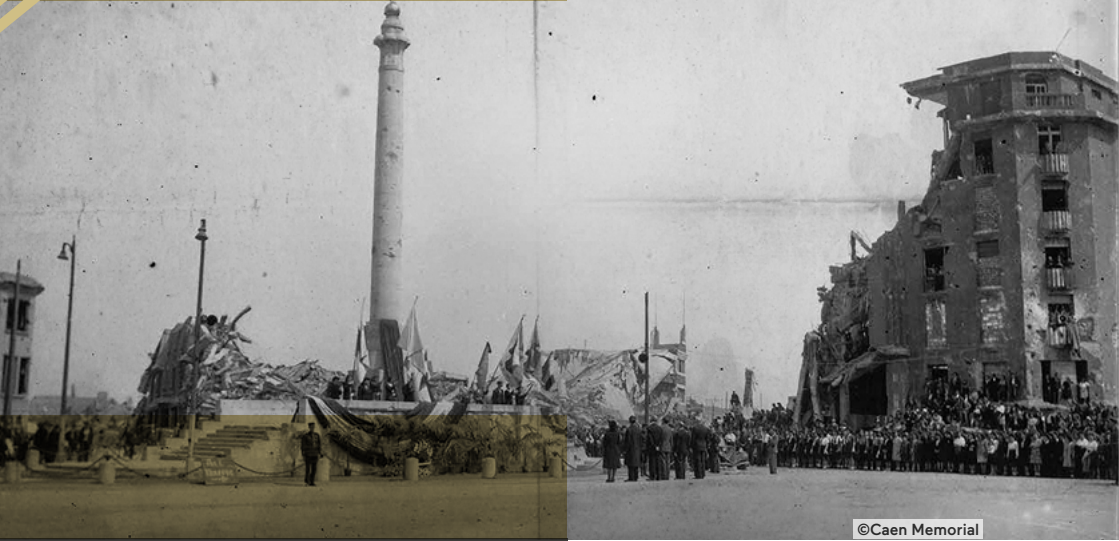
After the fall of the USSR, the town continued to develop, to the benefit of its inhabitants and young people: in 2001, an art school and sports school were created, the train station was rebuilt and, in 2003, a medical and social centre and charity canteen were opened. In 2005, 18 modern playgrounds for children, 11 sports fields and three outdoor training fields

were built.

During the Russian war against Ukraine, Bucha was one of the first cities to begin fighting against the occupiers in the Kyiv region. The city was occupied from 27 February to 31 March 2022. Immediately after liberation, photos of Bucha travelled the world.

In memory of this episode, a commemorative complex has been planned, known as "**Liberation**". This will be constructed near the Saint-Andrew church, where a mass grave of 116 civilian victims was discovered. The complex's purpose is to tell the story of the Ukrainians' heroic resistance and their fight for liberty. It will form part of a wider itinerary dedicated to the history of the Russian-Ukrainian war in the Kyiv region.

Destroyed by war in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but as courageous and resistant as any city in the Cities of Remembrance network, Bucha has been granted the status of associate city.



©Caen Memorial



©City of Caen

## ID CARD



Country

**France**

Mayor

**Joël Bruneau**

Inhabitants

**272,343 (urban area)**

Surface area

**362.90 km<sup>2</sup> (urban area)**

Main sectors of activity

**Automotive, microelectronics, electronic payments, marine, equine, health, logistics, tourism, agrifood**

## PRESENTATION OF THE CITY

Caen is located in the north-west of France, in the centre of the Calvados department. William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, who made it his home, deeply marked the city's history and changed the face of modern Europe. The heritage he constructed was largely destroyed during the Second World War. In 1940, Caen was effectively occupied, as the administration and services were placed under the authority of German forces. In June 1944, Caen suffered escalating violence. The city was elevated to the rank of "martyr", in the hopes of ensuring liberation by the Allied troops. 12,000 tonnes struck the city, reducing three quarters of the town to ashes and causing thousands of deaths.

Caen took great care to highlight its historic heritage during its reconstruction. This immense work was conferred to the urban planner Marc Brillaud de Laujardière: with the creation of a theatre, construction of a university with a

campus spanning 32 hectares, Haussmann-style blocks and more. In short, the city centre was completely restructured. This reconstruction gave Caen great architectural unity, structured around modernity and the valuing of historic heritage.

Vibrant and dynamic, Caen benefits from various tourist assets: marina in the heart of the city, parks and gardens, architectural heritage, a vast selection of shops and more. Caen is truly an eclectic land, bordered to the north by 120 km of coastline and a soaring hinterland ideally suited to agriculture and livestock breeding. This double "land and sea" identity has strongly contributed to the territory's attractiveness.

In 2013, Caen obtained the label "City of Art and History", awarding cities with remarkable heritage: diversity of heritage, a sustainable city and commitment and actions for its heritage.



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**ID CARD**



Country  
**United Kingdom**

Mayor  
**Jaswant SINGH BIRDI**

Inhabitants  
**345,300**

Surface area  
**100 km<sup>2</sup>**

Main sectors of activity  
**Manufacturing and engineering, aerospace, automotive, low-carbon energy, technologies and vehicles, rail**

**PRESENTATION OF THE CITY**

Coventry is unique in that it was the first city to be twinned with Stalingrad (known today as Volgograd) during the Second World War (1944). This twinning was the result of the actions of the women of Coventry and Stalingrad who, amid the suffering of these two cities, held out their hands in friendship. Today, Coventry is twinned with 26 cities and has various other sister cities. Many groups and institutions nourish friendly and cultural links and exchanges with these cities, such as the city council, the cathedral or the Coventry Association for International Friendship.

At the beginning of the Second World War, Coventry was home to many steelworks, including munitions and armament factories (25% of warplanes were produced there). As a key target, Coventry suffered intensive bombing by the Luftwaffe on the night of 14 and 15 November 1940, with a wave of 500 bomber aircraft. The city was heavily struck, with around 4,500 houses destroyed, 570 inhabitants killed and a further 730 injured.

Coventry was rebuilt fairly quickly after the Second World War, giving rise to the nickname

of the **"phoenix city"**. The city centre's post-war reconstruction incited great admiration. As the population continued to grow rapidly throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, its industries attracted workers from all over the United Kingdom and Ireland, the Caribbean, the Indian subcontinent, continental Europe and elsewhere. As a result, Coventry is now a multicultural city, recognised around the globe for its tolerance and international openness.

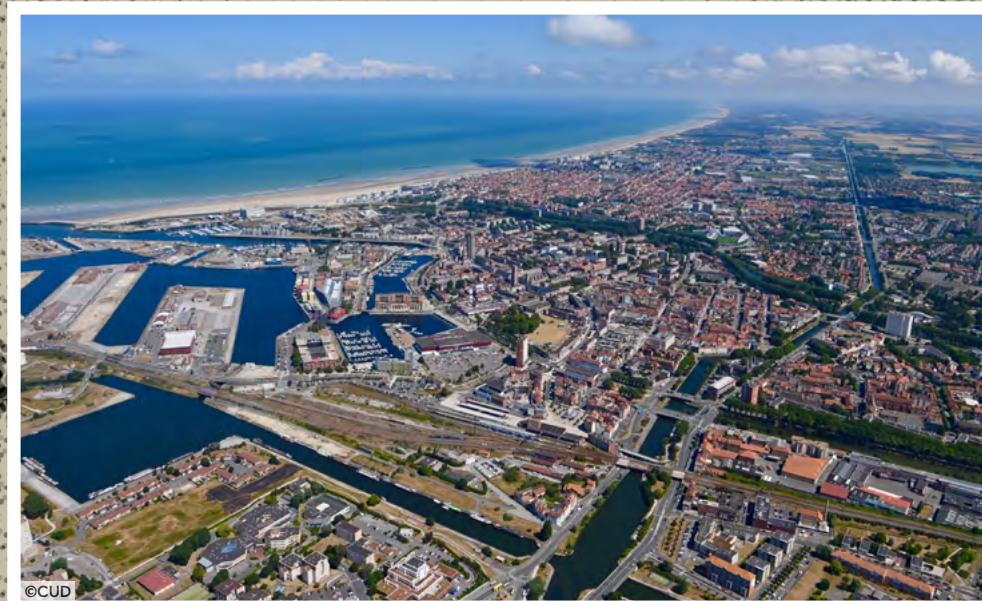
Coventry is also widely known as "the city of peace and reconciliation" as, immediately after the bombing of 14 and 15 November 1940, the provost Richard Howard visited the ruins of the cathedral of Coventry to recite **"Father, forgive them"**. This prayer led to the construction of the **"Community of the Cross of Nails"**, which now has many members around the world.

Furthermore, Coventry Cathedral was deliberately left in the state in which it was found following the bombing, with only its pillars and a few sections of wall remaining, bearing witness to the historic transformations left behind by the war. A new cathedral was reconstructed at the foot of the original.





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## ID CARD



Country  
**France**

Mayor  
**Jean BODART**

President of the Greater  
Dunkirk Council:  
**Patrice Vergriete**

Inhabitants  
**196,901 (urban area)**

Surface area  
**299.90 km<sup>2</sup> (urban area)**

Main sectors of activity  
**Port, decarbonisation, energy,  
logistics, metalworks, tourism,  
agrifood**

## PRESENTATION OF THE CITY

The Dunkirk area, destroyed before its inhabitants' eyes, was nothing more than a pile of rubble after the Second World War. The hell that was the war years had ripped up its soil, shaken its streets and destroyed its houses: of the 3,362 buildings in Dunkirk before the war, just 1,032 were deemed repairable. More than a challenge, the inhabitants were faced with a veritable battle to rebuild their city. In the 50s, Dunkirk was reborn from the ashes following the innovative principles of contemporary architecture. The habitants struggled to come to terms with their loss. Everyone therefore redoubled their efforts to make Dunkirk an attractive territory, proud of its roots and optimistic for its future.

Today, Dunkirk reflects its surrounding area: diverse and unexpected. Located just three hours from five European capitals and home to a large European maritime port, this urban area has been able to take advantage of its

geographical position, strengthening its tourist attractiveness: preserved natural spaces (15 km of beaches, 1,000 hectares of dunes, suburban spaces and more), human-sized shops mixing local boutiques with big-name brands, rich heritage including the Vauban fortifications at Gravelines and belfries listed as UNESCO World Heritage, a vast cultural offering (LAAC, FRAC, Caro's Choir of Light and more), hugely popular events (Dunkirk Carnival, 4 Days of Dunkirk, the sailing Tour de France à la Voile, the La Bonne Aventure music festival) and much, much more.

Today, Dunkirk is building the city of tomorrow, starting with new sustainable economic models: Euraénergie (innovative-project incubator, top-level training and research, hydrogen-industry development, etc.), implementation of free buses for all urban-area inhabitants, creation of a learning centre, zero-carbon university, development of offshore wind farming and more.



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**ID CARD**



Country  
**Poland**

Mayor  
**Aleksandra DULKIEWICZ**

Inhabitants  
**470,907**

Surface area  
**262 km<sup>2</sup>**

Main sectors of activity  
**Shipyards, textile industry, agrifood, chemicals and petrochemicals, tourism and environment**

**PRESENTATION OF THE CITY**

Gdansk is the capital of the Pomerania province. Located on the shores of the Baltic sea, Gdansk is the sixth largest city in Poland by population and the country's largest port city. Its population began to densify from the 10<sup>th</sup> century onwards, with the development of trade, fishing and craftsmanship. This was a veritable golden age, making it one of the most important hubs in Europe, within an openness unparalleled at the time. After its invasion by Sweden in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the partition of Poland, the city fell into significant decline. It fell under Prussian rule in 1793 and was then separated from the Republic of Poland. It became a free city once more after the First World War, before falling under the yoke of the Nazi party. Europe was plunged into the Second World War with the attack on Gdansk in 1939. The city was largely destroyed during its liberation by Soviet and Polish armies. After the war, Gdansk rejoined Poland. Drawing on lessons from a tumultuous past, Gdansk has become a symbol of the desire for peace in this country. Furthermore, Gdansk was the birthplace of the trade-union movement

Solidarnosc, which would play a key role in opposition to the pro-Soviet Polish regime. In 1989, Poland opted for democracy and entered the free market.

Between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, Gdansk saw a period of intense economic development thanks to its port activity and thriving exports to the rest of Europe.

Today, Gdansk's economy is dominated by shipbuilding, petrochemicals, chemicals, agrifood, the cosmetic and pharmaceutical industries, new technologies and the processing of amber.

Gdansk is home to rich historic and cultural heritage: Gothic, Renaissance, Mannerist and Baroque styles decorate museums, theatres and a host of historic monuments. This cultural wealth is the fruit of a heritage left behind by the German, Polish, Scottish and Dutch over the years. The city of Gdansk is listed as UNESCO World Heritage.

# GUERNICA Spain



©The ruins of Guernica. D.R.



©Pixabay, Almudena Sanz Tabernero

## ID CARD



Country  
**Spain**

Mayor  
**José María GORROÑO  
ETXEARRIETA**

Inhabitants  
**46,388 (urban area)**

Surface area  
**220 km<sup>2</sup> (urban area)**

Main sectors of activity  
**Tourism, services,  
industry and energy**

## PRESENTATION OF THE CITY

Guernica, historic and spiritual capital of the Basque Country, is a town in Biscay within the autonomous community of the Basque Country.

In 1937, German pilots from the Condor legion, sent by Hitler to support General Franco, dropped almost 50 tonnes of bombs and set the town on fire. In just a few hours, a fifth of the city was in flames and the fire had spread to

two thirds of houses. This was the first time in contemporary history that an urban population had been deliberately massacred.

A certain number of committed artists denounced the massacre and became the spokespeople for civil society: Picasso with his globally recognised "*Guernica*", the painter Joseph Grau-Garriga and the writer Paul Eluard.



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# HIROSHIMA Japan

City of the Mayors for Peace network, associated with the symposia



©AP/SIPA



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## ID CARD



Country  
**Japan**

Mayor  
**Kazumi MATSUI**

Inhabitants  
**1,186,594**

Surface area  
**906.25 km<sup>2</sup>**

Main sectors of activity  
**Automotive industry,  
port activities and  
remembrance tourism**

## PRESENTATION OF THE CITY

Located on the north coast of the Seto Inland Sea, on the island of Honshu, Hiroshima is the capital of the locality that bears its name and the largest city in the Chugoku region. Founded in 1589, Hiroshima became an important urban hub over the centuries.

Since 1945, Hiroshima has been known all around the world – alongside Nagasaki – due to the atomic bombings carried out by the American army. "**Little Boy**", a powerful 15-kilotonne uranium atomic bomb, instantly destroyed Hiroshima. This was the peak of human horror: 140,000 people died under the bombs in the months that followed the bombing.

The city was decimated, buried under the rubble. Only the "**dome**", the industry-promotion hall, resisted the explosion and has now become the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, listed as UNESCO World Heritage. In 1949, the Japanese government declared Hiroshima "**a remembrance city of peace**". Life continued and the city rediscovered its former glory with the reconstruction of iconic historic monuments from the pre-war period. The population

became committed to pacifism, soon joined by political personalities advocating for the abolition of nuclear arms and non-violence conflict resolution.

As such, the city of Hiroshima now houses the headquarters of the Mayors for Peace network. It is for this reason that the city has joined the Cities of Remembrance symposia on several occasions.



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## ID CARD



Country  
**South Korea**

Mayor  
**Cheol-Mo SEO**

Inhabitants  
**904,200**

Surface area  
**690 km<sup>2</sup>**

Main sectors of activity  
**Tourism, electronics,  
new technologies**

## PRESENTATION OF THE CITY

The city of Hwaseong is home to a UNESCO World-Heritage fortress, recognised since 1997. A document entitled "*Hwaseong Seong-yeokuigwe*" ("*Registry of the construction of the Hwaseong fortress*") served as an essential source for reconstruction efforts in 1970, after the ravages of the Korean war.

In 1919, Korea was under the colonial Japanese rule; there was then an uprising among the population of the Seoul region and, in the space of a month, the revolt spread across the region of the city of Hwaseong. In spring 1919, citizens of the village of Jeam-ri in Hwaseong took part in the Independence Movement, seeking to reconquer their sovereignty, lost to the Japanese forces.

On 15 April 1919, the adult men in the village who took part in the protest were brought together in the church of Jeam-ri under a false pretext. Soldiers, under the orders of Lieutenant

Arita, opened fire on the people gathered in the church, shooting through the windows. They then threw oil on the church, before setting it on fire. In total, some thirty houses in Jeam-ri were destroyed. Those who tried to escape from the church were executed. Women were also killed in the street as they ran towards the church. We do not know the exact number of victims killed outside the church. The military and police continued to sow terror, and six other people were slaughtered in the neighbouring village of Koju-ri not long after. The bodies were transported on stretchers and then buried in the public cemetery of Doiri, around 4 kilometres from the site of the disaster.

A Remembrance Centre has been created in order to pay tribute to the Hwaseong Independence Movement of 1 March and to its victims. This centre welcomes many visitors, particularly Japanese citizens.



©City of Krefeld



©City of Krefeld

## ID CARD



Country  
**Germany**

Mayor  
**Frank MEYER**

Inhabitants  
**235,800**

Surface area  
**137,68 km<sup>2</sup>**

Main sectors of activity  
**Textile, chemicals, mechanical and industrial construction, metalworking, Rhine port of Krefeld-Eurdingen: fourth-largest industrial port in North Rhine-Westphalia**

## PRESENTATION OF THE CITY

Krefeld (spelt Crefeld until 1925) is located in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, on the River Rhine. Mentioned for the first time in 1105, Krefeld was granted city status in 1373. Under the reign of the Dutch House of Orange, the city served as a sanctuary for the religious refugees of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, due to its neutrality. In 1702, the count of Moers, which Krefeld formed part of at that time, fell into the hands of the Kingdom of Prussia.

The city was then long famed for its silk and velvet production, introduced by Mennonite refugees in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. This textile production made Krefeld one of the richest cities in Prussia in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, earning it the name of Samt- und Seidenstadt (city of velvet and silk).

Between 1901 and 1929, Krefeld grew as it merged with several neighbouring cities, including Uerdingen and its port. The port was occupied by the Allies after the First World War,

from 1918 to 1926. It was also heavily bombed during the Second World War: the worst bombing took place on 21 June 1943, when British bombs destroyed various buildings in the east of the city, while a firestorm consumed large swathes of the city centre. On 2 and 3 March 1945, American troops entered Krefeld. Among these troops was the future American secretary of state Henry Kissinger.

Since 1991, the Villa Merländer has housed the official Krefeld documentation centre on the local history of nationalist-socialism. The city's Nazi past is not only retraced, studied and written there, it is also made accessible in a very particular way. It is an information-collection point on Jewish history, on the Holocaust in Krefeld and on all the victims of nationalist-socialist persecution, as well as an events space and educational centre for schoolchildren, students and anyone interested in Krefeld and the surroundings.



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## ID CARD



Country  
**France**

Mayor  
**Édouard PHILIPPE**

Inhabitants  
**265,498 (urban area)**

Surface area  
**495.80 km<sup>2</sup> (urban area)**

Main sectors of activity  
**Port, chemicals, automotive, mechanical, aeronautical, energy**

## PRESENTATION OF THE CITY

A popular seaside resort since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this city has seen its seafront progressively urbanised, driven by a fashion for sea bathing which placed Le Havre and its palaces among the favourite resort destinations of high society, the most renowned artists and European royalty. Large transatlantic liners linking Le Havre and New York began to set sail at full speed ...

But the effects of the Second World War made Le Havre one of the most heavily affected cities in Europe: due to the German occupation, but above all as a result of allied bombing on 5 and 6 September 1944, destroying the city centre and causing thousands of deaths and the destruction of 20,000 homes.

The reconstruction project, launched under the aegis of the Minister for Reconstruction and Urban-Planning, was entrusted to the architect August Perret. Within his studio, bringing together some 100 architects, he applied the principles of the school of structural classicism, combining the used of reinforced concrete and a classical vocabulary. Meanwhile, great emphasis

was placed on spaces, comfort, circulation and light. Le Havre therefore became a veritable urban laboratory, unique in its kind due to its exceptional scope, avant-garde urban-planning procedures, an unprecedented constructive coherence and new prefabrication techniques.

First-rate buildings were constructed, like the Saint-Joseph church built in homage to the civilian victims of the bombings. This was the architect Perret's masterpiece, with its spire culminating at a height of 107 metres, looking down over the town like a lighthouse or a New York skyscraper. The building was already considered a major architectural work at the time, included on the list of Historic Monuments in 1965 – less than 10 years after the completion of its construction in 1957. The City Hall, returning to its pre-war location, the ISAI (no individual allocated use) buildings surrounding its square and its gardens, housing the Appartement Témoin Perret today, or the Porte Océane and the southern seafront, opening the city onto the sea and the port, all constitute masterpieces of this architectural ensemble.



©AFP



©City of Dunkirk/CUD

## ID CARD



Country  
**France**

Mayor  
**Philippe LACROIX**

Inhabitants  
**25,686 (urban area)**

Surface area  
**338.10 km<sup>2</sup> (urban area)**

Main sectors of activity  
**Agriculture, forestry, fishing,  
industry, construction,  
third sector**

## PRESENTATION OF THE CITY

Oradour-sur-Glane is a French municipality, located in the Haute-Vienne department in the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region. The municipality, made up of 37 hamlets, is sadly known for the massacres carried out against its civil population during the Second World War. On 10 June 1944, the "Das Reich" Waffen SS troop surrounded the town, gathered the inhabitants and killed 643 men, women and children in cold blood.

Following the massacre, Oradour-sur-Glane became a ghost town. The war destroyed everything in its path. On 4 March 1945, General de Gaulle visited the municipality and named Oradour the symbol of the country's misfortunes during the Nazi occupation. On 10 May 1946, a law was unanimously voted on by the French parliament to preserve and protect the ruins of this martyred village, classified as Historic Monuments. The same text also provided for the

reconstruction of a new town nearby, with works for Oradour's rebuilding taking place between 1947 and 1953. Little by little, we began to see a sanctuarisation of these places and it is easy to understand the desire to bear witness to human barbarity. A duty of remembrance and the call for collective reflection was advocated for. Five monuments were therefore listed in the Inventory of Historic Monuments: the St-Martin church, the Laplaud castle, the martyr village, the earthen enclosure and its access ramp, the lantern of the dead and the statue of St Victorien.

A remembrance centre was inaugurated in 1999. It presents permanent exhibitions on "**contemplation and reflection**" in order to understand the historic events that took place in 1944. This interpretation centre aims to perpetuate the notion of the "**duty of remembrance**".



# OUISTREHAM RIVA-BELLA France



©Municipality of Ouistreham Riva-Bella



©Town of Ouistreham

## ID CARD



Country  
**France**

Mayor  
**Romain BAIL**

Inhabitants  
**272,343 (urban area)**

Surface area  
**362.90 km<sup>2</sup> (urban area)**

Main sectors of activity  
**Tourism, river trade, industry,  
sailing, wind farming**

## PRESENTATION OF THE CITY

Ouistreham Riva-Bella is a French municipality located in the heart of the Calvados department, in the Normandy region.

It was at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that this resort began to flourish, with the arrival of the railways and tourists coming for holidays and sea bathing.

During the Second World War, Ouistreham Riva-Bella was occupied by German troops from 19 June 1940 and, as a result of its geographic position, fortified as of 1941. A significant portion of the population, particularly children, was evacuated to the south of the department. Over 110 seaside villas were razed to build the 80 blockhouses of the Atlantic Wall. On 6 June 1944, 28,845 allied soldiers landed on the beaches of Sword Beach, located between Ouistreham Riva-Bella and Langrune. From 07:20 onwards, the Fourth Commando landed at Colleville-sur-

Orne (now Colleville-Montgomery), under the orders of Colonel Dawson. This Commando included six English troops and two troops led by the Commander Philippe Kieffer: the 177 French Green Berets forming the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion of marine fusiliers. Ouistreham Riva-Bella, the main target of the commandos, was therefore the only beach used by the French soldiers of the Free French Forces during Operation Overlord. These ranks included Alexandre Lofi and Léon Gautier. They landed on barges no 523 and 527 with the mission of freeing the beach of Ouistreham Riva-Bella, while taking on the Casino fortifications which they knocked down at around 11:00. Meanwhile, British soldiers were responsible for freeing the town and the port. This latter, extremely strategic, point would not fall until 7 June, at around 17:00. The taking of the Grand Bunker, the German headquarters, marked the town's full liberation on the night of 9 to 10 June.



©City of Rostock



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## ID CARD



Country  
**Germany**

Mayor  
**Eva-Maria KRÖGER**

Inhabitants  
**210,000**

Surface area  
**181 km<sup>2</sup>**

Main sectors of activity  
**Shipbuilding,  
port activities, tourism**

## PRESENTATION OF THE CITY

Rostock is located in the north of Germany, along the river Warnow. It is the largest city on the Baltic coast of western Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. In the Middle Ages, Rostock was an important member of the Hanseatic League (an association of merchant cities in Northern Europe, located around the North and Baltic seas). For three centuries, the Hanse played a key economic and political role in Europe.

Its geostrategic position was envied by external powers, in particular the Danish and Swedish during the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) and at the start of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It was not until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that Rostock discovered its economic attractiveness, thanks to the wheat trade and shipbuilding. At the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, industrial development continued, stimulated by the prevailing political orientation

in Germany, making Rostock one of the main centres of aeronautical construction. In 1942, the city centre was bombed by the Allied forces, and then again in 1944 by the Royal Air Force. More than 70% of the city was destroyed and 100,000 people were made homeless. After the war, Rostock became a first-rate industrial centre for the German Democratic Republic. After the fall of the Berlin wall, the city launched a vast programme of urban development, bringing the gabled houses so characteristic of Rostock back to life. Meanwhile, the city suffered a difficult economic period, though this did not stop it from becoming one of the most important ports in Germany. Today, Rostock's industry is mainly centred around the blue economy - in particular renewable energies, life sciences and sustainable tourism.

# SAINT-NAZAIRE France



©Collection Saint-Nazaire Agglomération Tourisme-Écomusée -Fonds Édouard Bourguell



©Pixabay, Luckysilver1

## ID CARD



Country

**France**

Mayor

**David SAMZUN**

Inhabitants

**127,395 (urban area)**

Surface area

**320.30 km<sup>2</sup> (urban area)**

Main sectors of activity

**Port and logistics, energy,  
naval, aeronautical industry,  
renewable marine energies,  
tourism**

## PRESENTATION OF THE CITY

In 1917, during the First World War, the first American contingents landed in Saint-Nazaire. The United States entered the war alongside the Allies, and chose Saint-Nazaire, as well as Nantes, as the main base for their military operations. For Saint-Nazaire, this kicked off the period of the "Sammies" presence ... Between 1917 and 1919, nearly 200,000 men were stationed in the city, while 4,400 tonnes of goods were delivered each day. To meet their needs, the Americans carried out significant works to the port and the city.

Though the First World War was therefore accompanied by a relatively positive foreign influence, the same could not be said of the Second World War. The German army, arriving in June 1940, made Saint-Nazaire one of its strategic points in the "Atlantic Wall", building an immense base on the site of the former transatlantic maritime station to house its submarine

fleets. The presence of this base made the city a key target for Allied bombing. It would not be liberated until 11 May 1945, after nine months of occupation. 75% destroyed, by that time the city was nothing more than a field of ruins around a still-standing submarine base ...

The city's reconstruction was conferred to the Prix de Rome architect Noël Le Maresquier, appointed by the Minister for Reconstruction and Urban-Planning.

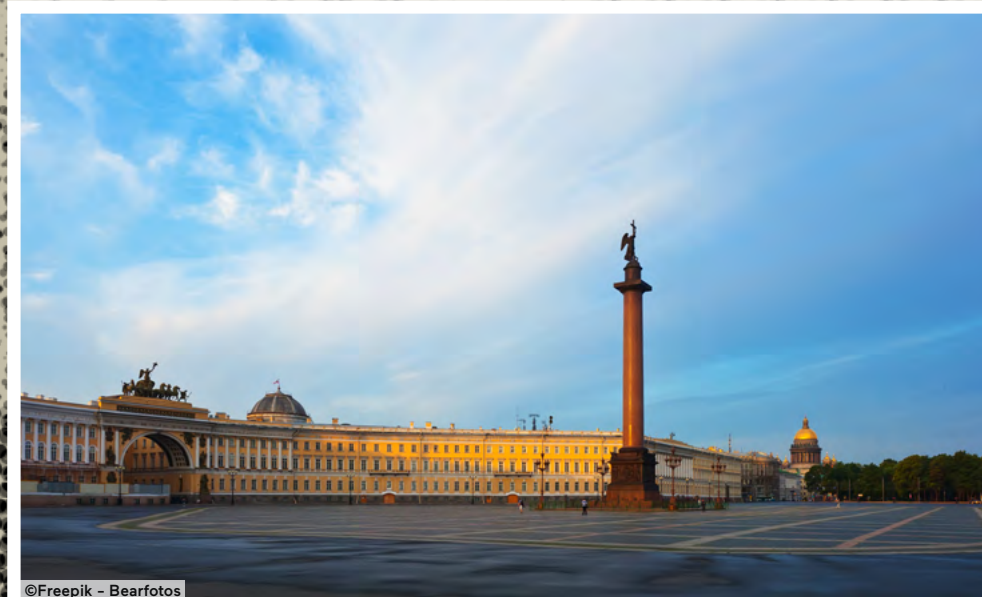
His style, known as "**Modern-Classic**", was marked by compositions integrating the advances of the modern movement with the classic forms of French architecture. The building's layout and careful orientation with regard to lighting are, without a doubt, the two key characteristics of Saint Nazaire's reconstruction, which has become a central theme in the city's enhancement.

# SAINT PETERSBURG\* Russia

\*before the Russian-Ukrainian conflict of February 2022



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## ID CARD



Country  
**Russia**

Mayor  
**Alexander BEGLOV**

Inhabitants  
**5,383,890**

Surface area  
**1,403 km<sup>2</sup>**

Main sectors of activity  
**Tourism, industry,  
shipbuilding, aerospace  
and aeronautical industry,  
port activities, electronics**

## PRESENTATION OF THE CITY

Saint Petersburg, located in the north-west of Russia on the Neva delta, is the second largest city in Russia in terms of population density.

Founded in 1703 by Tzar Peter the Great, the city excelled due to its aesthetics and the modernity of its urban architecture. The tzar's wish was to make Russia a power in its own right, opening itself up to European culture. Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Saint Petersburg was the country's main intellectual, scientific and political hub. The city became Russia's leading commercial and military port, and the country's second industrial centre after Moscow. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, uprisings were frequent in the city. Socialism began to take off and the city suffered a number of attacks, including the assassination of Alexander II. The city then fell into decline, due in particular to the various internal and global conflicts. In 1924, Saint Petersburg was renamed Leningrad upon Lenin's death.

During the war, Leningrad became a strategic point of interest for Nazi Germany. In 1941, the city was encircled by the German army and stormed. The Germans cut off food supplies to civilians, resulting in the death of 1.2 million civilians and 500,000 soldiers. After the end of the Second World War, the city became the symbol of soviet resistance and its reconstruction was a priority. In just a few years, a million workers cleared the rubble to make way for the restoration of architectural buildings.

Saint Petersburg is known around the world as a leading cultural hub, with 3 million visitors each year. The city is home to almost 70 museums and some forty theatres and auditoriums. 2,500 monuments have been listed as UNESCO World Heritage, which has significantly contributed to making the city a tourist destination of remembrance.



©Historia-muzeum-narodowego-w-szczecinie-6-20150520-1583590198



©Freepik - Rosshelenphoto

## ID CARD



Country

**Poland**

Mayor

**Piotr KRZYTEK**

Inhabitants

**400,990**

Surface area

**300 km<sup>2</sup>**

Main sectors of activity

**Shipbuilding, agrifood, metalworking, fertiliser production and the manufacture of machines for synthetic textiles**

## PRESENTATION OF THE CITY

Located in the north-west of Poland, on the Oder estuary, the city stretches out over 300 km<sup>2</sup>, of which 42% is occupied by green spaces and 24% by water. It is home to various parks, woods and lakes, including Lake Dgbie, the fourth-largest in Poland. The Szczecin Lagoon is considered one of the most beautiful in Europe.

Open to the Baltic sea thanks to its port, the city offers an exceptional gateway to the Nordic countries. It is closer to Berlin (130 km), Copenhagen, Stockholm and Prague than it is to its own capital, Warsaw (516 km).

Szczecin's history is very European: in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, it was born in the form of a merchant republic. Then, the city passed through the hands of the Polish, Danish, Germanic (under the government of the Slavic Griffin dynasty), Swedish, Prussians and Germans, one after the other. Traded by Stalin for modern-day Kaliningrad, which was originally intended to be returned to Poland, it became Polish once more in 1945. Its eclectic history gives it the appearance of a liberated, tolerant and cosmopolitan city. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a colony of French Huguenots settled there. Catherine II the Great, empress of Russia, was born there in

1729, and the city was occupied by Napoleon I at the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Today, it is said that the purest Polish is spoken in Szczecin, free of any accent whatsoever, due to the diversity of Polish populations who gathered there after the Second World War.

65% destroyed in 1945, Szczecin retained just a few of its ancient monuments – but that doesn't matter, because the city's architectural beauty stems from its urban fabric, designed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In order to modernise the city and respond to economic and demographic needs, it was entirely reconstructed at this time.

Today, Szczecin's population has fallen, in particular due to the decline in its renowned shipyards. The number of inhabitants has dipped below 410,000, just a little more than it was in 1930.

Is Szczecin a city resigned to the past? Its inhabitants certainly don't see it that way and launched a large restoration programme, StSE'tSin 2050. The new challenge is to take advantage of its ecological potential and transform it into a Green "Venice" of Northern Europe, with the largest marina in the Baltic sea.



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### ID CARD



Country  
**Russia**

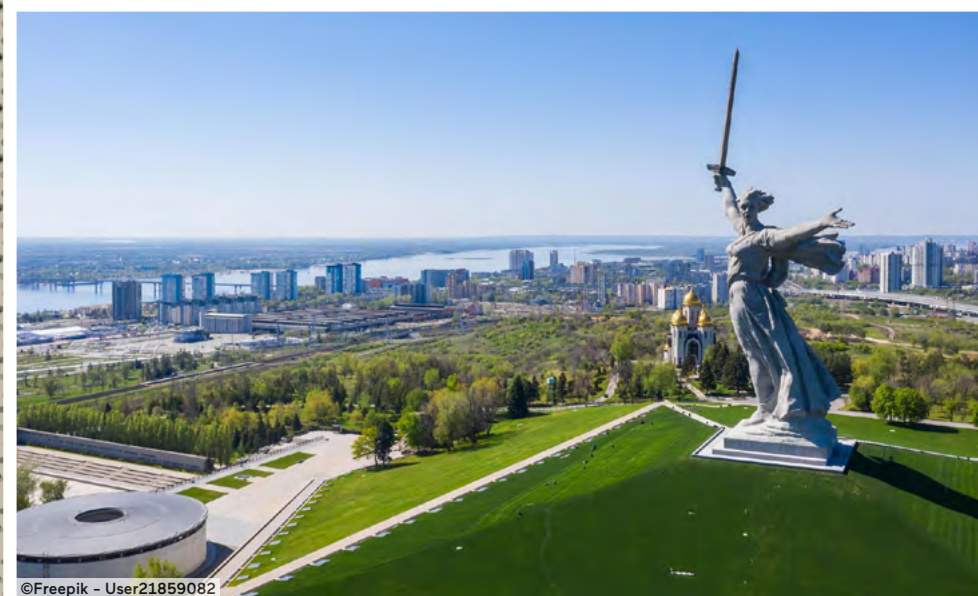
Mayor  
**Andrey KOSOLAPOV**  
(2014–2018)

**Vladimir MARTCHENKO**  
(since 2021)

Inhabitants  
**1,016,137**

Surface area  
**565 km<sup>2</sup>**

Main sectors of activity  
**Shipbuilding, petrochemicals,  
aluminium smelting,  
metalworking, steel industry**



©Freepik - User21859082

### PRESENTATION OF THE CITY

Originally baptised Tsaritsyn, then Stalingrad in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Volgograd is a Russian city packed with history. Located in the south-west of Russia, the city has always been at the centre of Russian history. Founded in 1589, Volgograd defended Tsarist Russia's unstable borders before becoming a trade capital in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The city would be the scene of heavy fighting during the Russian Civil War (1917–1923), but above all it would be recognised around the world as having been the centre of the Battle of Stalingrad. Though the later is considered one of the decisive battles of the war against the Axis forces, it was also one of the most costly in terms of human lives in military history: 750,000 fighters, 250,000 Axis soldiers and 480,000 Soviet soldiers, as well as 250,000 civilians, from six nations (Soviet Union, German Reich, Romania, Italy, Hungary and Croatia). Volgograd represented one of the great defeats of the German army and a strategic turning point in the Second World War.

The city saw the worst battle of its history, with 90% of its buildings destroyed. Volgograd quickly organised itself, reconstructing its city

centre in the "Stalinist" style: bronze statuettes, Rodin sculptures, Alley of the Heroes, Pavlov house ... The city's flagship museum, "**The Battle of Stalingrad**" presents gifts offered from around the world, in recognition of the bravery of its forces.



©City of Dunkirk/CUD



©City of Ypres

©City of Ypres

## ID CARD



Country  
**Belgium**

Mayor  
**Emmily TALPE**

Inhabitants  
**35,250**

Surface area  
**130 km<sup>2</sup>**

Main sectors of activity  
**Tourism, industry,  
agriculture**

## PRESENTATION OF THE CITY

Ypres is the capital of Westhoek area, located in the south-west of the province of West Flanders (Belgium). It is the sixth-largest city in the province, in terms of population. Ypres is a member of the West-Vlaanderen-Dunkirk-Côte d'Opale European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC).

In the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, Ypres was one of the most important and richest cities in north-western Europe thanks to its fabric trade. This prosperous period came to an end at the start of the 14<sup>th</sup> century as a result of the Hundred Years' War, which reduced supplies of English wool and made land-based trade much more difficult. Nevertheless, Ypres remained an important cloth-making city until the end of the Middle Ages.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Ypres became an episcopal city. Several monastic orders established themselves there, allowing the city to develop the art and industry of books. In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, Ypres was a border town whose ramparts were successively enlarged by the Spanish, the French, the Austrians and the Dutch.

During the First World War, Ypres was one of

the first cities martyred by the use of the first weapon of mass destruction: chemical weapons, including **"mustard gas"**. 500,00 people perished in the trenches or in the **"no man's land"** around Ypres. These four years of violence completely devastated the city.

It was in 1921 that the city's reconstruction began, in particular with the creation of over 150 military cemeteries and commemorative monuments (including the Menin Gate). Reconstruction works were carried out based on the pre-war model, in order to reaffirm the city's identity and reject the condemnation to death imposed by such destruction.

These constructions and reconstructions were the result of a long international debate. The First World War was a war with major democratic stakes, which upturned social relationships and raised collective awareness. It was in the interest of all that Ypres bore witness to the armed conflict.

Since 1985, Ypres has acted as a **"city of peace"**. As a result of its history, it has the right and duty to raise its voice in the still-relevant debate on war and peace.

# + FOCUS

ON A FEW PROJECTS  
CARRIED OUT AS PART OF

## THE CITIES OF REMEMBRANCE NETWORK

### PROJECT K'DANSES 2018/2019



©City of Dunkirk/CUD

K'Danses is a choreographic and artistic workshop which welcomes young girls aged between 16 and 25, in which each dancer offers their own ideas for choreographies, as well as with regard to design, lighting, costume and much more. Together, the dancers create – on the one hand – sporting choreographies for events like the Boucles Dunkerquoises, Dunkerque en Survet', the Téléthon, the BCM, football and USDK handball matches and, on the other hand, artistic choreographies for more prestigious events such as dance competitions, the Mayor's Greetings, the Jazz Circus and more. In sum, a host of continually adapted creations to delight a wide audience.

In 2019, the dancers of the K'Danses association travelled to Guernica to create a choreography with the Ross Dantza Eskola dance troupe. Aware of the shared World War history of their cities, the girls proposed a choreography on the theme of the destruction of war and, through their movements, sought to deliver a message of peace and solidarity. The video is available on their Facebook page.

[https://www.facebook.com/asso.kdances/?locale=fr\\_FR](https://www.facebook.com/asso.kdances/?locale=fr_FR)



©Wikipedia - Alexxx1979

### PROJECT STALINGRAD, CALL TO PEACE AT THE DYNAMO MUSEUM - 2018

From 4 June to 15 July 2018, the Dunkirk 1940–Operation Dynamo Museum welcomed an exhibition retracing the Battle of Stalingrad, on its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The "*Stalingrad, call to peace*" exhibition was designed by the Federal Museum of the Battle of Stalingrad and the Volgograd\* Region in Russia.

Made up of 22 panels presenting photos, drawings and unique archive documents, it is complemented by testimonies from civilians and fighters. It brings to life the behind the scenes of an extremely murderous combat which went on for 19 long months between 1942 and 1943, at the end of which the Allies emerged victorious. Unanimously understood by historians as a turning point in the Second World War, Stalingrad has been the subject of numerous documentaries and films. It is one of the most well-known battles around the world and remains synonymous, in our collective memory, with a veritable slaughter (between 1 and 2 million deaths).

\*Stalingrad was renamed Volgograd in 1961.







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## PROJECT PLACES OF REMEMBRANCE IN VINTAGE VEHICLES

GRAND-SYTHE PROFESSIONAL AUTOMOTIVE SCHOOL - 2019

The "Places of remembrance in vintage vehicles" project is based on an exhibition of the work of students from the Grande-Synthe professional automotive school, through four activities linked to:

- *The restoration of vintage vehicles (bodywork and mechanics)*
- *A deepened understanding of knowledge passed down over history and the students volunteering commitment (Wednesday afternoons)*
- *Tour of restored vehicles*
- *Feedback from the establishment's students and partners (doors-open day).*

The teachers' passion has allowed students to develop an interest in the history and heritage of our local area. As such, 28 students and several teachers from the school got involved, promoting these actions during the Cities of Remembrance week from 27 May to 2 June 2019, as part of the fourth Cities of Remembrance Symposium.

The establishment hopes to serve as a spokesperson for the Greater Dunkirk Council on matters of remembrance and cultural and civic appropriation. The embodiment of this desire, through the restoration and exhibition of vintage vehicles, allowed students, as well as Dunkirk citizens, to establish a link between the past, present and future.



©Facebook - École Sacré Cœur Saint-Pol-sur-Mer

## PROJECT SACRÉ CŒUR OGE

SAINT-POL-SUR-MER | DUNKIRK - 2019

Sacré Cœur OGE is a school welcoming students from primary to Year 10. It's main purpose is a teaching and education mission, whose educational project seeks to help young people grow up and become "*upstanding*" adults.

The Sacré Cœur middle school has offered students the chance to take part in a cooperative initiative with a Japanese establishment, as part of the Japan Club which has existed for 10 years.

Several actions have been carried out: a documentary film on remembrance, starring

the students of the Japan Club, and the design of engravings/prints with a local artist, to be published in a book produced by the students. The entire publication was translated and gifted to representatives from Hiroshima and the Cities of Remembrance during the fourth Cities of Remembrance Symposium, held in Dunkirk on 28 May 2019.

Furthermore, a cinema concert took place at studio43 during the Cities of Remembrance week, from 27 May to 2 June 2019. The school's orchestra class, orchestra club and the Hiroshima class all took part in this action.



©City of Dunkirk/CUD

## PROJECT TOUT EN SCÈNE 2019

This project consisted of the organisation of the "DKW" events village for the public, the local area and their projects on the theme of the "Dunkirk urban area and its history" as part of the fourth Cities of Remembrance Symposium. The aim was to support actors from charity organisations and initiatives designed by the people of Dunkirk, under the theme "Dunkirk and its history. City of yesterday, today and tomorrow!"

40 associations and Heritage, History, Remembrance, Nature, Environment and Vintage Actors, along with an exhibition, photos, documentary film, collection vehicle, games, concerts, activities and shows took part in this events village, housed on Place Jean Bart all day long on 1 June 2019.



© Tout en Scène



©City of Dunkirk/CUD

## PROJECT MEMORY: EUROPEAN COMMITMENT PRIZE 2019

Winner of the "Europe for Citizens" programme call for projects in 2018, the MEMORY project (Make European Memory Our Responsibility towards Youth) aimed to develop and reinforce European citizenship within the Cities of Remembrance network.

The Greater Dunkirk Council, in partnership with the Maison de l'Europe, has sought to help European citizens appropriate the history and heritage of their local areas, thereby hoping to encourage European citizens to take part in individual or collective projects bearing witness to European memory.

As such, this prize aimed to award projects that demonstrated a veritable European-memorial dimension, in various formats: videos, reports, blogs, artistic creation and more.



©City of Dunkirk/CUD

To achieve these objectives, the project brought together a wide and varied audience: young people (out of work and education, middle and high school students, migrants), working people and seniors. This approach was also supported by the historic partnership between the Greater Dunkirk Council and Rostock, as well as by recent cooperations – both cross-border (Ypres, within the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation) and internationally, with the city of Gdansk.

The MEMORY project was therefore fully aligned with the goals of the European Year of Heritage 2018, including the raising of historic awareness and common values, and promoting a sense of ownership of Europe. By involving as wide an audience as possible in its activities, MEMORY

also paid tribute to our common history, upon the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. This project was based on the implementation of an international symposium in Dunkirk in May 2019 (with the delivery of the European Remembrance Prize). The Maison de l'Europe also offered citizen workshops (training, seminars) with a collaborative teaching method, allowing inhabitants – recruited through member structures and institutional contacts – to take ownership of questions of remembrance in partner territories.

Though hampered by the health crisis, the project also facilitate the organisation of an exchange for five young people from the cities of Rostock, Ypres, Gdansk, Bizerte and Dunkirk, partners of the Cities of Remembrance network.



©City of Dunkirk/CUD



©City of Dunkirk/CUD

## A PROJECT IN PROGRESS: FRANCO-GERMAN TERRITORIAL VOLUNTEERING 2023

As part of Franco-German Territorial Volunteering, two young people were offered the chance to carry out a civic service in two cities within the network: one at the Dunkirk Dynamo Museum and the other in the Villa Merländer, in Krefeld. For one year, they supported these places of remembrance in welcoming the public, supporting cultural awareness and even working together on a tour project coordinated between the two sites.

# CITIES OF REMEMBRANCE NETWORK

## TODAY AND TOMORROW

More so than ever, the global context demonstrates the need to promote the values of peace, solidarity and innovation in terms of the proactive maintenance of the remembrance, resistance and resilience that make up the common force of the Cities of Remembrance network.

Above all, the dramatic health crisis that affected us all in 2020 and 2021 shook our societies, revealing their limits and fragilities. Populations, and in particular young people, have been significantly affected. The annual symposia, initially planned in Oradour-sur-Glane and Bizerte, could not be held. However, the cities of the network have, through their shared memory, been able to reconstruct and support their young generations, always with this spirit of resilience that characterises them.

After the annexation of South Ossetia and Abkhazia (Georgia), and then Crimea (Ukraine) by Russia, the Russian military invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 triggered a war and severe humanitarian crisis not seen since the end of the Second World War and the war in former Yugoslavia. The war crimes perpetrated on Ukrainian soil have aggravated this human crisis. This situation has a very particular resonance for the Cities of Remembrance, who immediately demonstrated their solidarity in response to this new historic shock.

As such, the Greater Dunkirk Council has welcomed 20 young people as part of a respite stay, upon the request of Mr Fedoruk, mayor of Bucha. A 10-day break in the difficult everyday lives of these 16-18 year olds, to allow them to practise sporting and cultural activities and meet other young people from all over Europe. Other cities, like Gdansk, have provided financial aid to Ukraine. Beyond the emergency humanitarian aid implemented by many cities, technical aid for the reconstruction of Ukrainian cities is now a major issue for network members.

The network also remembers the wars that continue to rage in the rest of the world, such as the conflict between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, or the wars in Syria, in Burma, the Horn of Africa, the south of the Arabian peninsula, in Sudan, in Nigeria, in the African Great Lakes region and in Iraq, to name but a few examples.

These events all prove that it is more essential than ever to continue supporting initiatives for solidarity and projects for youth mobility, as well as the committed events and discussions that have been taking place within the Cities of Remembrance network since 2016. It is in this spirit of dynamism and international support that the city of Krefeld (Germany) entered the network in 2023, and that Bucha (Ukraine) has now been associated, at its request.

A new symposium is now planned for June 2024, in Oradour-sur-Glane, upon the 80th anniversary of the massacre that took place in the village in 1944. Alongside this symposium, an international exchange has been organised for 40 young people between four cities: Bucha, Dunkirk, Krefeld and Oradour-sur-Glane. This mobility will offer them the chance to work on remembrance: its components, its development and its resonance faced with modern issues and contexts.



THE CITIES OF  
REMEMBRANCE  
NETWORK



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