

# Fédération Européenne des Cités Napoléoniennes Destination Napoleon

## Activity Report 2025



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





## Activity Report 2025

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## OUR NETWORK

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Founded in 2004 by Charles Bonaparte, the European Federation of Napoleonic Cities (FECN) brings together more than 50 European cities whose history has been shaped by Napoleonic influence.

It was born from the desire of municipalities to reposition their Napoleonic heritage within a European perspective. By highlighting major and contrasting chapters in the continent's history, it helps enrich the shared culture of Europe's peoples and define a common heritage.

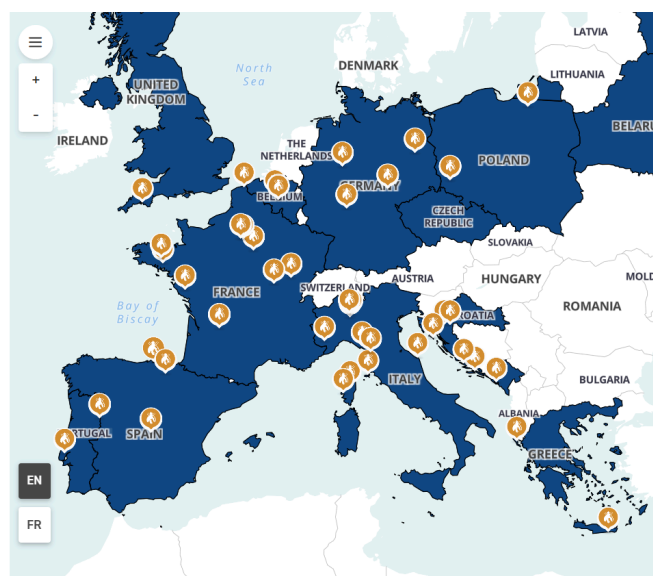
In 2015, the European dimension of its work was recognised through the "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe" certification awarded to Destination Napoleon, a route dedicated to promoting and networking Napoleonic heritage.

Since its certification, FECN – Destination Napoleon has been subject to regular evaluation, carried out every three years, in order to ensure compliance with the criteria established by the Council of Europe. In May 2023, this certification was renewed, thereby confirming the relevance and quality of its commitment.

### Members

In 2025, the Federation continued its work of consolidating and energising the network, relying on the active commitment of its member cities and partner institutions. Members contribute to the implementation of cultural, scientific, educational and tourism-related actions, fostering exchanges and synergies at the European level.

During 2025, a new member joined the Federation, testifying to the growing attractiveness of the Destination Napoleon network and its European reach. This was the City of Ancona (Italy). This new membership strengthens the geographical and thematic diversity of the network while opening up new prospects for cooperation and joint projects.



### Partners

FECN – Destination Napoleon establishes partnerships with stakeholders from various fields – education, research and local development – in order to carry out specific projects.

It also concludes cooperation agreements with other Cultural Routes certified by the Council of Europe, such as Iter Vitis and the Via Francigena, or with universities to host trainees. These trainees collaborate with the team on routine assignments as well as one-off projects linked to their course of study.

## Napoleonic Museums

In 2025, the Federation continued its efforts to promote Napoleonic heritage by strengthening its museum network.

From 23 September 2025 to 11 January 2026, the Palazzo Reale in Milan hosted the exhibition devoted to Andrea Appiani, a major figure of Neoclassicism and a painter closely linked to the Napoleonic period. Through a route rich in artworks and documents, the exhibition highlighted the artistic and political influence of the First Empire while underlining the role of museum institutions in transmitting a shared European heritage.

In addition, on 20 November 2025, a scientific meeting was held at the Palazzo Reale in Milan, devoted to a renewed reading of Napoleon's coronation as King of Italy through clothing and objects preserved in various European heritage collections. Organised in collaboration with museum institutions and experts, this event fostered dialogue between researchers and museum professionals on the issues of preserving, interpreting and transmitting Napoleonic heritage.

During the European Heritage Days at the Maison de l'Europe in Paris, a conference organised in partnership with the French Ministry of Culture highlighted the role of Cultural Routes – including museum stakeholders – in promoting shared heritage.

## The Federation in Figures

Founded in 2004 by Charles Bonaparte; a French non-profit association under the 1901 law since 2005.

9 founding cities.

9 institutions and 34 member cities.

115 municipalities in 11 countries in 2025.

Certified as a "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe" in 2015.

35 partner museums in 9 countries.

More than 6,000 followers on social media.

On average, 1,600 people visit its website each month.

## List of Members

<b>BELGIUM</b> Braine-l'Alleud Fleurus Sombrefe	Paris Pontivy-Communauté Rueil-Malmaison Val de Louyre et Caudeau	Portoferraio Sarzana
<b>CROATIA</b> Mali Lošinj Milna Orebić Petrinja Slunj	<b>GERMANY</b> Grossbeeren Hanau Hövelhof Jena	<b>MONTENEGRO</b> Herceg Novi
<b>FRANCE</b> Ajaccio Autun Auxonne Calvi	<b>GREECE</b> Corfu Ierapetra	<b>POLAND</b> Bolesławiec Lidzbark Warmiński
	<b>ITALY</b> Ancona	<b>PORTUGAL</b> Historical Route of the Lines of Torres - 8 municipalities Almeida
		<b>SPAIN</b> Aranjuez

Colpo Corte Coudekerque-Branche La Roche-sur-Yon Montereau-Fault-Yonne	Cuneo Palazzo Reale, Milan Lucca Monza	Vitoria-Gasteiz  <b>UNITED KINGDOM</b> Plymouth
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## ACTIVITIES OF THE FECN – DESTINATION NAPOLEON

For 2025, the European Federation of Napoleonic Cities chose to devote its annual theme to landscapes, understood as living and meaningful spaces shaped by history and human interaction. This approach reflects the desire not only to promote the material traces of the Napoleonic past, but also the natural and territorial settings that were both the stage and the reflection of cultural, political and social transformations over the centuries.

This orientation invites each member to explore and highlight, through events, exhibitions, publications or guided tours, the landscapes that structure the identity of their territories. Whether urban landscapes shaped by the imprint of the administrative and architectural reforms of the First Empire, or rural landscapes and hills that witnessed episodes of the Napoleonic epic, the theme encourages a plural and deeply contextual reading of the period. It thus fosters historical, geographical, aesthetic and environmental perspectives that enrich audiences' understanding.

By making landscape a prism through which to think about Napoleonic heritage, the FECN strengthens its mission of fostering cultural and scientific dialogue among its members while contributing to the sustainable enhancement of European heritage. This approach not only underlines the close links between history and territory, but also promotes an attentive rediscovery of the places and contexts that tell the story of Europe, yesterday and today.

### Imperial Days and Membership Ceremony – Val de Louyre et Caudeau

In 2025, the municipality of Val de Louyre et Caudeau organised the Imperial Days, marked by an official ceremony of accession to the FECN. This event brought together elected representatives, institutional partners, associations and history enthusiasts around a programme combining re-enactments, cultural activities and formal moments.



This accession reflects the territory's desire to become part of a European dynamic for the enhancement of Napoleonic heritage. The Imperial Days thus highlighted local history while strengthening the municipality's integration within the FECN network.

More information : <https://www.destination-napoleon.eu/val-de-louyre-et-caudeau-journees-imperiales-et-ceremonie-dadhesion/?lang=en>

### Participation in the 14th Council of Europe Cultural Routes Annual Advisory Forum – Cappadocia

In 2025, the FECN took part in the 14th Annual Advisory Forum of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, organised in Cappadocia, Turkey. This international meeting brought together institutional representatives, managers of certified routes, experts and cultural partners around the strategic issues of the Cultural Routes programme, in particular governance, transnational cooperation, sustainability and innovation. The active participation of the FECN in this event strengthened its integration within the European network, helped develop new synergies with other routes and reaffirmed its commitment to the values promoted by the Council of Europe.

More information : <https://www.destination-napoleon.eu/la-fecn-participe-au-14%e1%b5%89-forum-des-itineraires-culturels-du-conseil-de-leurope-en-cappadoce/?lang=en>

### **Cultural Routes Training Academy – Portugal**

In 2025, Destination Napoleon co-organised, alongside Iter Vitis and the European Institute of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, the Cultural Routes Training Academy in Portugal. This training academy brought together route managers, institutional representatives and experts in order to strengthen skills in governance, transnational cooperation and the strategic development of European cultural networks. Through workshops, working sessions and exchanges of good practice, this initiative illustrated the FECN's commitment to professionalism, quality and stronger synergies between certified Cultural Routes.

### **FECN Presence at the Madrid Book Fair**

In 2025, the FECN took part in a photographic exhibition devoted to the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe crossing Spain, organised by the Ministry of Culture at Retiro Park in Madrid during the Book Fair. This initiative helped promote the European dimension of the network to a wide audience.

The presence of the municipality of Aranjuez, a member of the FECN, within the exhibition illustrated the network's roots in Spanish territory. A presentation dedicated to Cultural Routes in Spain, organised at the CaixaBank Pavilion, also helped strengthen the visibility and understanding of the Council of Europe Cultural Routes programme.

### **Cultural Routes Exhibition at the Maison de l'Europe – Paris**

In 2025, the FECN took part in the event "Maison de l'Europe – Cultural Routes", devoted to promoting the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. This initiative brought together institutional representatives, route managers and cultural actors around issues related to European cooperation, heritage enhancement and the development of transnational networks.

The presence of the FECN at this event helped strengthen its visibility within the Cultural Routes programme, promote the actions carried out by its member cities and consolidate synergies with other certified routes. This participation forms part of an ongoing strategy of dialogue and integration within the European cultural routes ecosystem.

More information : <https://www.destination-napoleon.eu/maison-europe-cultural-routes-2025/?lang=en>

### **Participation in the Dialogue on the Values of the Council of Europe – Aranjuez**

In 2025, Maria del Pozo, representative of Aranjuez, represented the FECN in an initiative organised by the Routes of Emperor Charles V, devoted to integrating the values of the Council of Europe into the [www.destination-napoleon.eu](http://www.destination-napoleon.eu)

management and transmission of cultural heritage. This meeting provided an opportunity to discuss the fundamental principles of the Cultural Routes programme – intercultural dialogue, transnational cooperation and the promotion of European values – from an operational perspective.

The participation of the FECN in these exchanges illustrates its active involvement in the collective reflection carried out within the Cultural Routes network and contributes to strengthening the consistency of heritage promotion practices at the European level.

More information: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rTVD4mMM1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rTVD4mMM1s)

### Meeting of the 33 Cultural Routes Crossing France – French Senate

In 2025, the FECN took part in the meeting “33 Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe crossing France”, organised at the French Senate at the invitation of Ms Catherine Morin-Desailly, Chair of the Committee on Culture, and in cooperation with the French Ministry of Culture. The Federation was represented by Vincent Chauvet, President, and by Eleonora Berti, Director of the FECN and President of the French Federation of European Cultural Routes.

The presence of representatives of the Council of Europe, in particular Matjaž Gruden, Director for Democracy, and Rui Gomes, Executive Secretary of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes, underlined the institutional importance of this meeting. It helped strengthen synergies between the Cultural Routes present in France and consolidate their visibility at both national and European level.

## VISIBILITY

### Destination Napoleon Logo - 10 Years of Certification

The year 2025 marked the tenth anniversary of the certification of “Destination Napoleon” as a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe (2015–2025). On this occasion, the Federation created and disseminated a specific commemorative logo, symbolising this European recognition and the path travelled since certification was first obtained.



This anniversary logo, widely relayed by members of the network in their communication materials and events, helped highlight the European dimension of the route and reaffirm the FECN's commitment to the values promoted by the Council of Europe: cooperation, intercultural dialogue and the enhancement of a shared heritage.

The visual identity of the network is strengthened by the use of the official logo, thereby ensuring shared visibility on a European scale.

### Website

In 2025, the website continued to develop in order to strengthen the network's visibility and improve content accessibility. Regular updates were made throughout the year, notably through the publication of members' news, the promotion of events linked to the annual theme and the highlighting of the tenth anniversary of Destination Napoleon's certification as a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe. These developments helped provide an increasingly dynamic and comprehensive presentation of the European Federation of Napoleonic Cities and its actions at European level.

[www.destination-napoleon.eu](http://www.destination-napoleon.eu)

More information: [www.destination-napoleon.eu](http://www.destination-napoleon.eu)

### Social Media

The visibility of FECN – Destination Napoleon is also ensured through an active presence on social media, in particular Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and X (formerly Twitter). These platforms make it possible to relay the network's news and promote members' initiatives, thereby contributing to the European outreach of the Cultural Route.

Facebook, Instagram, YouTube: @destinationnapoleon

X: @destinapoleon

### Communication Tools

The Federation deploys a wide range of communication tools throughout its network. Some are designed for specific events or sites, such as the "Destination Napoleon France" guides or certain applications. Others, however, are rolled out across the whole network, such as passports, posters or Destination Napoleon flyers.

More information: <https://www.destination-napoleon.eu/visibilite/>

## COOPERATION IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

One of the priorities of FECN – Destination Napoleon is to promote exchanges on Napoleonic history by organising meetings, conferences and publications in partnership with universities, cultural institutions and historical associations.

Within this framework, the network organises and participates in various meetings, in person or online, in collaboration with its members and major cultural institutions at local and national level.

On 29 and 30 October 2025, the European Federation of Napoleonic Cities – Destination Napoleon took part in the



seminar of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe organised in Birgu (Malta). This meeting brought together institutional representatives, managers of certified routes, heritage experts and local authorities around issues of governance, transnational cooperation and the sustainable development of European cultural networks.

Discussions focused in particular on strengthening synergies between routes, improving communication and visibility strategies, as well as on good practices in evaluating and implementing the criteria of the Cultural Routes programme. This seminar enabled the FECN to consolidate its presence within the European network and affirm its commitment to active cooperation.

More information: <https://www.destination-napoleon.eu/seminaire-itineraires-culturels-malte/?lang=en>

## **The Role of the Scientific Committee**

The members of the Scientific Committee contribute to the scientific and public initiatives organised by the Federation, promoting the network's multi-perspective approach through their interventions during conferences and meetings.

## **Spotlight on our Members**

### **“Le Rotte Mediterranee di Napoleone” – Portoferraio**

In May 2025, the City of Portoferraio, a member of Destination Napoleon, co-organised the event “Le Rotte Mediterranee di Napoleone” in partnership with Visit Elba World, Fondazione Isola d’Elba ONLUS, UGIVI and Iter Vitis. Organised from 3 to 5 May 2025 at the Teatro dei Vigilanti “Renato Cioni”, these meetings brought together researchers, cultural institutions and territorial stakeholders around Napoleonic Mediterranean routes, the promotion of wine heritage and the prospects for sustainable cultural tourism.

The event benefited from the involvement of scholars, notably Luigi Migliorini, a member of the FECN Scientific Committee, thereby anchoring the discussions in a dynamic of research and academic cooperation. Through thematic conferences, debates and cultural initiatives, this event illustrated Portoferraio's strategic role in strengthening dialogue between heritage, scientific research and European cultural networks.

### **Venice at the Crossroads 2025 – Dialogue and European Perspectives**

In 2025, the FECN took part in the event “Venice at the Crossroads”, organised in Venice and bringing together experts, researchers, institutional representatives and cultural stakeholders around major contemporary issues related to heritage, European cooperation and intercultural dialogue. This meeting provided a strategic space for exchange to address the current challenges of transnational cultural networks, in particular in terms of governance, sustainability and innovation.

The participation of the FECN in this event illustrates its active commitment to European debates on heritage enhancement and on building stronger cultural cooperation between territories.

More information: <https://www.destination-napoleon.eu/venice-at-the-crossroads-2025/?lang=en>

### **Symposium “From One Empire to Another” – Paris**

On 7 October 2025, the Musée de l’Armée hosted the scientific symposium organised by the Fondation Napoléon, entitled “From One Empire to Another. Use, evolution and symbolism of French weaponry”. On this occasion, four scholarly presentations were delivered by curators and specialists from the museum, helping to shed light on the continuities and transformations of French armament from a historical and symbolic perspective.

This participation illustrates the museum's commitment to research and to the dissemination of knowledge related to the Napoleonic period, by fostering dialogue between heritage institutions and researchers.

More

information:

<https://fondationnapoleon.org/2025/06/24/4e-rencontres-militaires-de-napoleonica-la-revue-dun-empire-a-lautre-emploi-evolution-et-symbolique-de-larmement-francais/>

## 210th Anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo

In 2025, the Waterloo Battlefield 1815 Estate, a member of the FECN, commemorated the 210th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo in Braine-l'Alleud. This commemoration brought together re-enactors, historians, cultural institutions and the general public around a programme combining historical evocations, ceremonies and educational activities, making it possible to revisit this major episode in European history.

Through these initiatives, the site continued its commitment to transmitting Napoleonic memory and promoting an emblematic heritage site, while also contributing to the territory's cultural and tourism attractiveness within a European perspective.

More

information:

<https://www.destination-napoleon.eu/210eme-anniversaire-de-la-bataille-de-waterloo/?lang=en>

## ENHANCING EUROPEAN MEMORY, HISTORY AND HERITAGE

The FECN – Destination Napoleon network, alongside its cities and partners, works to highlight both the tangible and intangible heritage associated with the Napoleonic period. This effort concerns not only emblematic major sites, but also more discreet spaces that are no less significant. The aim is not only to restore their historical context and significance, but also to strengthen cooperation and exchanges between the European territories involved in the network.

Through a variety of actions and joint projects, this cultural route seeks to nurture awareness of a shared historical foundation on a European scale. It also encourages a nuanced view of the Napoleonic legacy, the interpretation of which remains plural and is sometimes the subject of debate depending on the countries concerned.

### Spotlight on our Members

#### Napoleonic Day – Corte

On 27 September 2025, Corte organised the 5th edition of Napoleonic Day, devoted this year to the theme of the legend of Napoleon's birth and the Strada di Letizia. This edition made it possible to address the memorial construction surrounding the Emperor's birth, between popular traditions, oral transmission and historical analysis.

Professor Michel Vergé-Franceschi's lecture, entitled "From Christopher Columbus to Napoleon, the birth of myths and legends", together with the screening of the video "Anchja or the birth of a Napoleonic legend", contributed to shedding light on this reflection. Activities organised in the public space – bivouac, exhibitions, changing of the guard and military music – completed the programme and helped promote Napoleonic memory to the public.

More information: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCDtzO5FUjo>  
[www.destination-napoleon.eu](http://www.destination-napoleon.eu)



## Multi-period and Multiverse Camp in Coudekerque-Branche

On 19, 20 and 21 September 2025, the City of Coudekerque-Branche organised the 13th edition of its multi-period and multiverse camp at Ferme Vernaelde. This large-scale event offered an immersive route covering different historical periods, from Roman times to the Second World War, including a Napoleonic bivouac that highlighted the legacy of the First Empire within a broader historical dialogue.

Nearly 2,600 pupils from the Dunkirk urban area benefited from a structured educational programme developed in partnership with participating associations and schools. Educational materials distributed to teachers helped strengthen the educational dimension of the event, whose influence extended to other school districts. Despite unfavourable weather conditions, nearly 6,000 visitors were welcomed over the weekend, confirming the success and territorial reach of this initiative.

Through this event, the City of Coudekerque-Branche fully illustrates the objectives of the FECN in terms of research and development, enhancement of European heritage and promotion of sustainable cultural tourism, by encouraging intergenerational transmission and cooperation between associative, educational and institutional actors.

More information: <https://www.ville-coudekerque-branche.fr/events/camp-multi-epoques-2/>

## Tribute to General Louis Thévenet – Dunkirk and Austerlitz 2025

From 28 to 30 November 2025, the Brigade Vandamme of Coudekerque-Branche took part in the international re-enactment of the 220th anniversary of the Battle of Austerlitz in Tvarožná, Czech Republic. Alongside 1,500 re-enactors from 15 countries, the northern French representatives portrayed the 43rd Line Infantry Regiment, paying tribute to General Louis Thévenet, a native of Dunkirk, a veteran of Austerlitz and former mayor of Coudekerque-Branche.

Alongside this European mobilisation, a commemorative ceremony was held on 30 November 2025 at the cemetery of Dunkirk, in the presence of memorial associations and descendants of the General. On this occasion, a new plaque was inaugurated and a solemn tribute was paid to this local figure of the First Empire. This initiative illustrates the transnational dimension of remembrance and the willingness of FECN members to create a dialogue between local history and shared European heritage.



More information: <https://www.destination-napoleon.eu/reconstitution-internationale-du-220%e1%b5%89-anniversaire-de-la-bataille-dausterlitz-un-haut-lieu-de-memoire-europeenne/?lang=en>

## Napoleon Team Building – Pontivy

In 2025, the Pontivy Tourist Office developed an innovative offer entitled “Napoleon Team Building”, aimed at companies and groups seeking an immersive experience centred on Napoleonic history. This

initiative combines heritage discovery and collaborative activities, allowing participants to explore the city's historical legacy while strengthening team cohesion.

Through challenges, tests and routes inspired by the Napoleonic context, this offer helps renew forms of heritage mediation and place history within a contemporary dynamic geared towards business tourism and local economic development.

More information: <https://www.destination-napoleon.eu/pontivy-team-building/?lang=en>

### **Historical Re-enactment of the Siege of Almeida**

On 29, 30 and 31 August 2025, the municipality of Almeida organised the historical re-enactment of the Siege of Almeida, recalling the events of 1810 during the third French invasion of Portugal. This large-scale event recreated the life of a military camp, manoeuvres and battles, as well as nineteenth-century civilian daily life, in an immersive approach combining heritage, education and citizen participation.

Organised in partnership with the Portuguese Army – Directorate of Military History and Culture, the Portuguese Napoleonic Association and the Historical Re-enactment Group of the Municipality of Almeida, the event brought together between 7,000 and 10,000 visitors. Highlights included a nineteenth-century ball and a cultural evening entitled “Peace in Europe”, inviting participants to rediscover the past through music, dance and the arts, as well as a family area focused on the theme of peace and encouraging the participation of children and young people.



Through this initiative, Almeida reaffirms its commitment to promoting European heritage and intergenerational transmission by offering a historical reading open to dialogue and reflection on common European values.

More information: <https://www.cm-almeida.pt/evento/21o-cerco-de-almeida/>

### **Restoration and Display of the Eagle of the Return of the Ashes – Musée de l'Armée (Paris)**

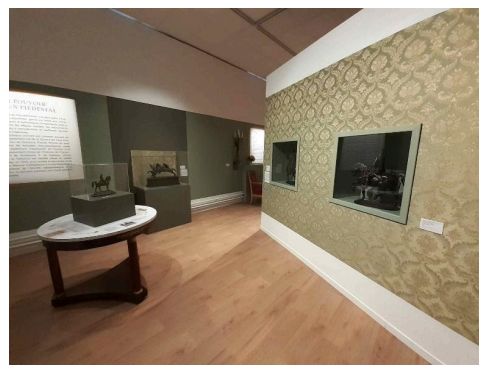
In December 2025, the Musée de l'Armée restored and rehung the Eagle known as the “Return of the Ashes”, preserved in the Vauban room. This emblematic object, linked to the ceremony of the return of Napoleon I's ashes to Les Invalides in 1840, is a major material testimony to imperial memory and its reappropriation in the nineteenth century.

The enhancement of this heritage piece contributes to the transmission of a historical legacy of European significance, underlining the symbolic importance of the Empire in the construction of national and memorial representations.

More information: <https://www.facebook.com/reel/2970662853127374>

### Exhibition “Shaping La Roche” – La Roche-sur-Yon

From 6 December 2024 to 1 March 2025, the City of La Roche-sur-Yon presented the exhibition “Façonner La Roche” (“Shaping La Roche”), designed in two complementary parts around the city’s imperial history and Place Napoléon. Organised as part of the celebrations for the 220th anniversary of the city’s foundation, the exhibition paid tribute to the equestrian statue of Napoleon, inaugurated in 1854 and created by Count Émilien de Nieuwerkerke, a major figure of official sculpture under the Second Empire.



The first part was devoted to the sculptor’s work, career and relationships, while the second explored the urban history of Place Napoléon, designed from 1804 as the nerve centre of the new prefecture of the Vendée. Beyond local history, the exhibition questioned the symbolic and identity-related issues of public statuary, models of imperial squares and the dynamics of urban rehabilitation in the twentieth century. Bringing together 1,893 visitors (individuals and groups), this event was a major cultural highlight combining scholarly research, heritage mediation and the promotion of European heritage from an educational and tourism perspective.

More information:

<https://larochesuryon.fr/musee-de-la-roche-sur-yon/>

### Restoration of the Honour Gates of Bonaparte High School – Autun

In 2025, the City of Autun inaugurated the restored honour gates of Bonaparte High School, an emblematic element of local Napoleonic heritage. This conservation operation made it possible to preserve an architectural and historical testimony directly linked to the imperial legacy and to the educational identity of the institution.



Through this initiative, the municipality affirms its commitment to protecting and enhancing material heritage, placing this action within an approach focused on transmission to younger generations and on highlighting Autun’s role within the FECN network.

More information:

<https://www.destination-napoleon.eu/inauguration-de-la-restauration-des-grilles-dhonneur-du-lycee-bonaparte-a-autun-un-patrimoine-napoleonien-bientot-mis-a-lhonneur/?lang=en>

[www.destination-napoleon.eu](http://www.destination-napoleon.eu)

## CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGES FOR YOUNG EUROPEANS

Young people are among the priority audiences of the actions developed by the members of the network and the partner museums of FECN – Destination Napoleon. Particular attention is paid to transmission to school groups and families through attractive and adapted formats.

Many initiatives are therefore implemented: exhibitions combining historical rigour and interactivity, discovery workshops, playful trails in the form of treasure hunts, and visits in costume offering lively immersion in the Napoleonic era. These activities, regularly organised throughout the network, are designed to make history accessible, engaging and stimulating for younger generations.

### Spotlight on our Members

#### Soldier's School (Escola do Soldado) – Almeida

On 15 and 16 March 2025, the municipality of Almeida organised the “Soldier’s School” (Escola do Soldado), an initiative devoted to promoting military heritage through the activities of the Historical Re-enactment Group of the Municipality of Almeida (GRHMA). This event made it possible to explore military techniques related to siege warfare and manoeuvres of the early nineteenth century, while also highlighting civilian life in a wartime context.



Organised in partnership with the Portuguese Napoleonic Association and the GRHMA, this activity brought together 190 participants. Through demonstrations, workshops and practical exercises, it helped strengthen the transmission of historical knowledge and promote European heritage through an educational and immersive approach.

More information: <https://www.cm-almeida.pt/evento/escola-do-soldado-2025/>

#### Escape Room – “Trapped in the Museum: The Wandering Souls” (2nd edition) – Almeida

On 21 February 2025, the Almeida Historical Military Museum organised the second edition of the escape room entitled “Trapped in the Museum: The Wandering Souls” (Presos no Museu, As Almas Penadas). This initiative offered a new way of discovering the museum through an immersive experience combining scenography, historical riddles and heritage interpretation.

Guided by the historical character of Lieutenant John Beresford, wounded during the Battle of Ciudad Rodrigo and sheltered in Almeida’s military

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hospital, the visit invited participants to explore the collections from a narrative and interactive perspective. By going beyond the purely informative dimension of the objects on display, this activity fostered curiosity, discovery and a contemporary approach to cultural transmission, illustrating the link between historical heritage and innovative cultural practices.

More information:

<https://www.cm-almeida.pt/presos-no-museu-2a-edicao-almas-penadas/sem-categoria/>

### **Workshop “An Enchanted Christmas at the Museum, with Ladies and Soldiers!” – Almeida**

On 18, 19 and 23 December 2025, the Almeida Historical Military Museum organised the workshop “An Enchanted Christmas at the Museum, with Ladies and Soldiers!” (Um Natal encantado no Museu, com Damas e Soldados!). This initiative offered participants a playful and educational discovery of the different historical periods represented in the museum through the exploration of period costumes and dress practices.

By combining the transmission of knowledge with a festive atmosphere, this workshop helped root historical heritage in a convivial and intergenerational moment. The activity forms part of the museum’s desire to promote European heritage while fostering cultural appropriation by young audiences and families.

More information: <https://www.cm-almeida.pt/>

### **Extracurricular Enrichment Activities (AEC) – “The French Invasions” – Almeida**

From April to June 2025, extracurricular enrichment activities (AEC) devoted to the theme of the “French Invasions” were developed in partnership with the Almeida School Grouping. These educational actions made it possible to deepen knowledge of local heritage linked to the events of the Peninsular War, while offering pupils a concrete and participatory approach to history.

Through workshops encouraging creativity and manual dexterity, pupils learned to identify and understand the traces left by this period in their environment. Bringing together 702 participants, this initiative helped strengthen awareness of European heritage and encourage its appropriation, enhancement and preservation by younger generations.

More information: <https://www.cm-almeida.pt/>

### **19th-Century Dance Workshop – “Dance in the Time of the French Invasions” – Almeida**



From May to August 2025, the municipality of Almeida organised a nineteenth-century dance workshop entitled “Dance in the Time of the French Invasions” (A Dança no Tempo das Invasões Francesas). This initiative enabled children and young people in the area to discover the tangible and intangible cultural heritage linked to the period of the Peninsular War.

Through learning nineteenth-century historical dances, participants explored the social and cultural customs of the period in an educational and participatory approach. Bringing together 900 young people, this activity

contributed to strengthening the appropriation of European heritage by new generations and encouraged its enhancement and preservation in an intergenerational perspective.

More information: <https://www.cm-almeida.pt/>

### **Publication of the Journal of the Siege of Almeida and Launch of the Children’s Journal – Almeida**

In August 2025, the Almeida Historical Military Museum published the fourth edition of the Journal of the Siege of Almeida, devoted to the events of 1810. This year’s edition was marked by the launch of the Children’s Journal, a publication specially designed for young audiences.

Through adapted content combining historical news and curiosities related to the siege of Almeida, this initiative aims to raise awareness among younger generations of local and European history. By developing accessible and attractive educational tools, the museum strengthens its mission of heritage transmission and enhancement of collective memory from an educational and intergenerational perspective.

More information: <https://www.cm-almeida.pt/>

## **CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC PRACTICE**

Napoleonic heritage is not only an object of study or remembrance: it also represents a source of inspiration for contemporary artistic creation. By encouraging encounters between history and artistic expression, the FECN supports initiatives that renew forms of cultural mediation and open dialogue between past and present on a European scale.

Through projects led by its members, the network encourages innovative forms of interpretation mobilising visual arts, performing arts, music, illustration, design and digital tools. This approach makes it possible to reach diverse audiences, stimulate creativity and place the Napoleonic legacy within a current cultural dynamic that is accessible and inclusive.

### **From History to Comics – Lucca Comics & Games**

Within this perspective, the FECN took part in the Lucca Comics & Games festival in Lucca, where Napoleon was revisited through the prism of comics. This initiative illustrates the ability of historical heritage to engage with contemporary artistic forms and reach a broader audience, particularly younger generations. By fostering the meeting between historical memory and contemporary visual culture, the Federation affirms its desire to place European heritage within a creative, inclusive and resolutely contemporary dynamic.

More information:

<https://www.destination-napoleon.eu/de-lhistoire-a-la-bd-napoleon-sinvite-au-lucca-comics-games/?lang=en>

## **Spotlight on our Members**



### **Temporary Exhibition “Uniforms and Figures of 1810” – Almeida**

From 25 August to 12 December 2025, the Almeida Historical Military Museum presented the temporary exhibition “Uniforms and Figures of

1810” (Fardas e Figuras de 1810). This exhibition brought together 11 life-size infographics from a collection of 20 panels, each illustrating eight detailed representations of the various corps and services of the Portuguese army during the Peninsular War.

Infantry, Caçadores (light infantry), cavalry, artillery, engineering, militias and ordenanças were represented through the uniform models worn between 1807 and 1815. The infographics, created by Prof. Dr Sérgio Veludo, and the scenographic design by designer Nuno Leal made it possible to offer a reading of Portuguese military heritage that was both scholarly and visual. With 5,412 visitors, this initiative contributed to the enhancement of European heritage and to the development of sustainable cultural tourism in the territory.

More information: <https://www.cm-almeida.pt/>

### Digital Innovation and Gamification – Vila Franca de Xira

In Vila Franca de Xira, participants were able to test a virtual reality game designed entirely by the municipality, offering immersion in the village during the time of the French Invasions. This interactive experience gives visitors the opportunity to discover local history as well as that of the Rota Histórica das Linhas de Torres through a playful and educational approach.

This initiative illustrates the integration of digital tools in the enhancement of Napoleonic heritage, using gamification as a vector for cultural mediation and tourism attractiveness, while fitting into a European strategy of innovation within the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

More information: <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1640749399977350>

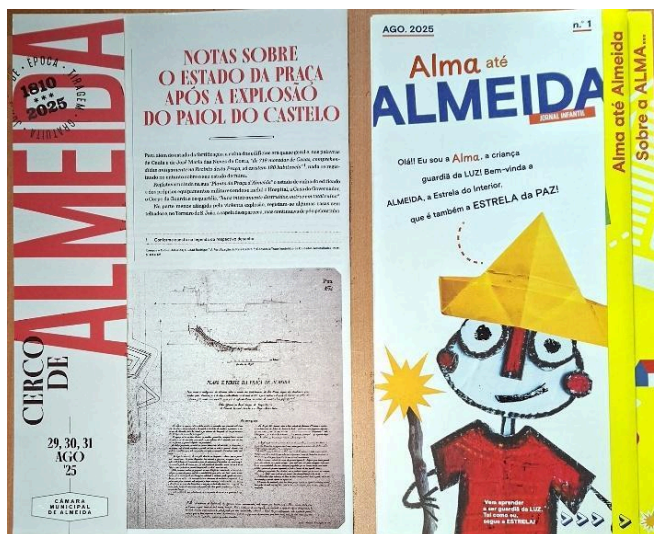
### Temporary Exhibition “The Re-enactor Is Also a Collector” – Almeida

From 25 August to 30 September 2025, the Almeida Historical Military Museum presented the temporary exhibition “The Re-enactor Is Also a Collector” (O Recriador também é um Colecionador). This initiative paid tribute to the members of the Historical Re-enactment Group of the Municipality of Almeida (GRHMA), highlighting their commitment to the study and dissemination of history.

Through the presentation of personal collections and objects linked to military history, the exhibition underscored the documentary rigour and passion that drive historical re-enactors. By highlighting the link between individual research, collective memory and heritage transmission, this exhibition contributed

to the promotion of European heritage and to the cultural dynamism of the territory, attracting 4.012 visitors during its opening period.

[www.destination-napoleon.eu](http://www.destination-napoleon.eu)



More information: <https://www.cm-almeida.pt/>

### **Autumn Walk in Rastoke – Slunj**

On 4 October 2025, the Slunj Tourist Board organised an autumn walk in Rastoke, inviting participants to discover a harmonious dialogue between natural heritage, history and local traditions. Through a guided tour, participants explored the period of French administration, the history of the Military Frontier and the rich heritage of Slunj, in an exceptional setting marked by waterfalls and historic mills.

Punctuated by musical performances and traditional dances, this initiative brought together 50 participants in an immersive atmosphere that highlighted both landscape and historical memory. By combining cultural heritage and natural environment, this activity illustrates the Croatian member's commitment to the development of sustainable cultural tourism and to the enhancement of European heritage at local level.

More information: <https://slunj-rastoke.hr/en/autumn-walks-experiences-in-slunj-october-2025/>

## **CULTURAL TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

FECN – Destination Napoleon, in close connection with its members, develops actions aimed at more responsible and sustainable tourism. In partnership with Tourist Offices and all local stakeholders, whether public or private, the network seeks to promote the cultural and natural riches that shape the identity of each territory. This approach aims to reconcile tourism attractiveness with the preservation of heritage resources.

### **Spotlight on our Members**

#### **European Cultural Tourism Award – Rota Histórica das Linhas de Torres**

In October 2025, the Rota Histórica das Linhas de Torres, a member of the FECN, received first prize in the category “Digitalisation in Smart Tourism – Cultural Heritage and Creativity aspects, enhancing visitor experiences” during the 12th edition of the European Cultural Tourism Awards. Organised by the European Cultural Tourism Network, the ceremony took place on 2 October in Sibiu. This distinction rewards the efforts made in digitalisation and innovation in the enhancement of cultural heritage, aimed at enriching the visitor experience. It notably recognises the commitment of Ana Umbelino, Vice-President of the Rota Histórica and Executive Vice-President of the FECN, as well as the work of the whole Portuguese team in the development of smart and sustainable cultural tourism.



#### **1st Meeting of the Portuguese Napoleonic Routes – Vila Franca de Xira**

On 20 and 21 November 2025, the Rota Histórica das Linhas de Torres organised the first Meeting of the Portuguese Napoleonic Routes at the Palácio do Sobralinho in Vila Franca de Xira. Held under the motto “Step out of your fort!”, this national initiative aimed to strengthen cooperation between museums,

heritage institutions, cultural organisations and local authorities involved in promoting the Napoleonic legacy in Portugal.

This meeting encouraged the sharing of experiences, the development of territorial synergies and the structuring of a coordinated cultural and tourism offer around the Napoleonic routes. By supporting this initiative, the FECN contributes to consolidating the network's momentum at national level while strengthening its anchorage in a European strategy for sustainable cultural tourism.

More information: [https://invademag.pt/Encontro\\_IN/](https://invademag.pt/Encontro_IN/)

### **Craft Souvenir “Petrinja Incense Burner” – Petrinja**

On 7 November 2025, the Petrinja Tourist Board presented a new handcrafted souvenir designed by the Petrinja Ceramics Studio: the “Petrinja incense burner”. Made by hand from fired clay, this object combines local tradition, ceramic heritage and contemporary design through shapes symbolising the city's identity – linden leaf, chestnut, heart or house – and infused with natural essential oils.

Beyond its aesthetic and functional dimension, this product highlights Petrinja's cultural heritage and its place within European Cultural Routes, notably the European Route of Ceramics and Destination Napoleon. By placing local craftsmanship within a broader European cultural context, this initiative contributes to heritage enhancement and the development of sustainable cultural tourism, while also strengthening the city's territorial identity.

More information: <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1352328416348893>

### **Mimosa Festival and International Outreach – Herceg Novi**



In 2025, the municipality of Herceg Novi strengthened its commitment within the network through the organisation of a special celebration as part of the traditional Mimosa Festival, including an international floral exhibition dedicated to this emblematic flower of the region. This event highlighted the city's cultural identity while consolidating its tourism attractiveness, notably thanks to the participation of FECN representatives in the opening of the festival.

More information:

<https://www.destination-napoleon.eu/le-festival-du-mimosa-a-herceg-novi/>

## THE BODIES AND TEAM OF THE FECN

The European Federation of Napoleonic Cities (FECN) is a French association governed by the 1901 law on associations. Its President, Vincent Chauvet, has held office since 2022 and is supported by Charles Bonaparte, founder of the Federation, who was appointed Honorary President in 2023. The Federation has been directed by Eleonora Berti since 2021. Since Autumn 2024, Marjolaine Forrer held the position of coordinator until May 2025, supporting daily activities and maintaining relations with members. Denise de Rroux then served in this role on an interim basis before handing it over to Jacques Chevin in September 2025. Denise Deroux now serves as European Projects Officer.

The Secretariat of FECN–Destination Napoleon is provided by the City of Autun.

With the aim of involving members more closely in the life of the Federation, vice-presidents have been appointed for each country. These vice-presidents, coming either from an FECN member city or from a partner institution, report on the actions carried out in their respective countries, in line with the priorities of FECN – Destination Napoleon. They work in particular on implementing initiatives in the fields promoted by the Federation, such as the transmission of Napoleonic heritage, as well as on opportunities for funding and European cooperation.

Vice-presidents play an essential role in the development of the Federation, both at national and macro-regional level, facilitating the establishment of new activities in their countries. They are appointed during the Federation's General Assembly.

### **Honorary President**

Charles Bonaparte

### **President**

Vincent Chauvet

### **Executive Vice-President**

Ana Umbelino (Torres Vedras, PT)

### **Secretary General**

Nicolas Bouillon (Autun, FR)

[www.destination-napoleon.eu](http://www.destination-napoleon.eu)

#### **Vice-presidency by country**

Municipality of Autun (FR)

Municipality of Sombreffe (BE)

Municipality of Lucca (IT)

Tourist Office of Milna (HR)

Municipality of Herceg Novi (ME)

Municipality of Bolesławiec (PL)

Municipality of Plymouth (UK)

Historical Route of the Lines of Torres (PT)

#### **Director**

Eleonora Berti

#### **Coordinator**

Jacques Chevin

#### **European Projects Officer**

Denise de Roux

#### **Accountant**

Anja Schwind

## **The Board of Directors and the General Assembly**

The Federation's Board of Directors is made up of all its members, as well as, depending on the themes discussed, partners and observers. It meets monthly or quarterly in order to monitor ongoing activities, both at Federation level and among its members, and to coordinate European projects and cooperation actions.

The General Assembly is held every year with all members in order to review past and ongoing activities, approve the strategic orientations and the operating budget, and proceed with statutory renewals. It also constitutes a privileged moment to formally present new members and strengthen ties between the cities of the network.

In 2025, the annual General Assembly of the FECN was held from 5 to 7 May in Lucca, Italy. The public and statutory sessions took place at Villa Bottini, in the presence of representatives of member cities, institutional observers and European partners.

This meeting made it possible to:

- present the activities and projects of FECN – Destination Napoleon for 2024–2025;
- approve the 2025 and 2026 accounts and budgets;
- renew the governing bodies;

- unanimously re-elect Vincent Chauvet as President and Ana Umbelino as Executive Vice-President;
- re-elect Charles Bonaparte as Honorary President;
- sign a cooperation agreement between the European Federation of Napoleonic Cities and the European Association of the Via Francigena, thereby strengthening synergies between two Cultural Routes certified by the Council of Europe.

The General Assembly also confirmed that the 2026 General Assembly will be organised in Herceg Novi (Montenegro), illustrating the transnational dynamic of the network.

Beyond the statutory sessions, participants benefited from a cultural programme highlighting Lucca's Napoleonic heritage, notably the National Museum of Palazzo Mansi, Elisa's Theatre at the Ducal Palace and the exhibition "The Green Revolution of Elisa Baciocchi" at the Botanical Garden.

More

information:

<https://www.destination-napoleon.eu/assemblee-generale-annuelle-de-la-federation-europeenne-des-cites-napoleoniennes-2025/?lang=en>

## The Scientific Committee

Since the creation of the FECN, the Scientific Committee has supported and guided the work of the Federation team and its members through a multidisciplinary approach. Composed of academics and experts from various European countries, its members specialise in complementary disciplines that are essential for the development and strengthening of the network.

The Scientific Committee works closely with the Federation team to offer the public a plural vision of Napoleonic history and to co-construct a European narrative through the Destination Napoleon route. It meets regularly in order to assess the activities carried out by FECN – Destination Napoleon and to examine membership applications from new members.

More information: <https://www.destination-napoleon.eu/comite-scientifique/?lang=en>

### President

Jacques-Olivier Boudon

### Members

Joško Belamarić

Sandro Debono

Maria Gravari-Barbas

Alessia Mariotti

Luigi Mascilli Migliorini

Roberto Race

Michel Thomas-Penette

# The FECN Organisational Chart

