

PEACE LINE. Peace Ambassadors wanted

PEACE LINE. Peace Ambassadors wanted is an innovative project that the Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge e.V. started in 2020 to promote international encounters, understanding and European cooperation. PEACE LINE integrates young adults from all over Europe and combines the eventful history of the 20th century with perspectives for a sustainable future.

The Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge e.V. works under the patronage of the Federal President. The PEACE LINE project takes place in close cooperation and with the support of the Federal Foreign Office.

PEACE LINE in short:

- What:** 2-week study trip to places of remembrance and commemoration of the 20th century through various countries in Central, Southeast and Eastern Europe with a group of around 30 young adults.
- Why:** The project serves to promote international understanding and peacekeeping, to curb populism, racism and nationalism and to establish an international network committed to a strong, united Europe.
- Who:** Apprentices and young professionals between the ages of 18 and 26 from Europe
- Costs:** The project is financed by the German Foreign Office. All costs during the route are borne by us. There is a participation fee of 100 euros, we will subsidize travel to and from the event.

The idea

Young people between the ages of 18 and 26 from different European countries embark on a two-week study trip through several European countries. You will visit historically important places of remembrance and commemoration of the First and Second World Wars, the division of Europe and the European awakening. The participants get to know important milestones in the history of Europe together and deal with the different perspectives (“narratives”) of collective memory, especially in dealing with the Nazi reign of terror. In this way, it is possible to learn to understand the national memory of historical events from other perspectives and to approach one another. This creates the basis for better transnational and intercultural understanding as the foundation for European cooperation on an equal footing. The participants become aware of their national identities and at the same time are sensitized to the dangers of racism and nationalism. In this way, PEACE LINE makes an important contribution to empowering the younger generation to take part in shaping a peaceful future for Europe through active social participation.

The journeys

There have been changes and adjustments on all existing routes compared to previous years. Especially the starting points have changed, please take this into account.

The **Blue Route** starts in Riga, where the participants deal with the Soviet occupation and the resistance against it in museums, memorials and eyewitness talks. From there you take the bus to Kaunas and then on to Warsaw. Various aspects of life in the Second World War and the Warsaw Ghetto are discussed there. Then it goes on to Gdansk and from there to the youth education center of the Volksbund on the Golm (Usedom). The journey ends there with a 2-day final workshop.

The **Green Route** begins in Prague, where the group explores the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich and life under socialism. From there the journey leads to Germany. In Weimar, the route draws an arc from the beginnings of German democracy to the reign of terror of the National Socialists when visiting the Buchenwald Memorial. Then it goes to Munich and Überlingen and then further to Alsace to the Hartmannswillerkopf, where we deal with the horrors of the First World War, before it ends after a visit and Strasbourg in the youth education center Niederbronn-les-Bains.

The **Yellow Route** begins in Sarajevo, where the group deals with both the outbreak of World War I and the Yugoslav Wars. The next stop is the memorial in Srebrenica, where an eyewitness talk will take place. From there the route continues to Belgrade and then to Skopje with a stop at the Memorial Park in Kragujevac. After a stop full of workshops in Prilep, the route ends in Skopje. In addition to the two world wars, this route focuses on the Yugoslav wars and their impact on the landscapes of remembrance in the Western Balkans.

The **Red Route** is currently in the conception phase. It is all about the motto "peace treaties" and leads from Münster in Germany to the youth meeting center of the Volksbund in Ysselsteyn. The route then leads via Amsterdam and Brussels to Paris, where the suburban treaties that ended the First World War are discussed. This is followed by the battlefields of Verdun before the route finally ends at the Niederbronn-les-Bains youth center, where a final workshop ensures the necessary reflection on the experience.

The dates

Blue Route	27.05 - 10.06.23, Riga to Golm
Yellow Route 1	17.06 - 01.07.23, Sarajevo to Skopje
Green Route	16.07 - 30.07.23, Prague to Niederbronn-les-Bains
Red Route	21.07 - 03.08.23, Münster to Niederbronn-les-Bains
Yellow Route 2	02.09. -16.09.23, Sarajevo to Skopje