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Europe/International Projects

City of Bocholt writes to former Jewish fellow citizens

Mayor Christian Mangen continues the letter tradition and endeavours to maintain contacts

At the end of the year, the city of Bocholt once again wrote to nine former fellow citizens of the Jewish faith and their families around the world. In the letter, Mayor Christian Mangen combines the message of Hanukkah as the "Festival of Lights" with wishes for peace, security and confidence. At the same time, he emphasises the city's responsibility for respectful coexistence and a clear stance against anti-Semitism, hatred and violence.

In his letter, the mayor also refers to the current anti-Semitic attacks in Australia and expresses his sympathy to those affected. In addition, he looks back on Bocholt's Year of Remembrance 2025 under the motto "80 Years of Peace and Freedom" and announces that he will continue to actively shape the culture of remembrance - including with the next Holocaust commemoration in January 2026. He also refers to numerous events in Bocholt: on 9 November 2025, for example, a municipal event on Pogrom Night took place at the memorial site of the former synagogue, which was co-organised by pupils from Mariengymnasium.

The annual letter campaign has a long tradition in Bocholt: it goes back to an initiative by the then Lord Mayor Günther Hochgartz and has been continued for decades by the respective mayors in office. Around 50 letters were sent as early as 1979. In addition to the letter campaign, the city of Bocholt still invites former fellow citizens and their descendants to visit Bocholt. In December, for example, Ursula Friede's son, Prof Peter Bamberger, came to Bocholt from Israel to visit the Jewish cemetery here, among other things. These trips will continue to be supported - as has been the practice for years - with a small financial contribution from the city of Bocholt.



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