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Europe/International

After 15 years: Student exchange between Euregio-Gymnasium and French partner school revived

Eleven pupils on a visit to Aurillac

After 15 years, the Euregio-Gymnasium has now visited the Lycée Emile Duclaux with eleven pupils from year 10. The school belongs to the French twin town of Aurillac.

"It's been a long time since I stood in this place, and I'm glad to be doing it again 15 years later", said Frank Gassen, teacher at Euregio-Gymnasium, at the official reception in the town hall. This was the last official item on the agenda of a week-long visit to the capital of the department of Cantal.

The city of Bocholt has been twinned with Aurillac for over 50 years and is delighted about the latest exchange, which "also strengthens civic relations between the cities", as Petra Taubach, European Affairs Officer for the city of Bocholt, emphasises.

The relationship between the Euregio-Gymnasium and the Lycée Duclaux is similarly old, but has been dormant for some time for various reasons. This is now over with the current visit. Despite all the adversities, such as postponed appointments, school routines and rail strike announcements, the small group made the journey of over 1,200 kilometres and was rewarded with unique experiences and an exciting programme.

Varied programme in the Auvergne

The French hosts did everything they could to ensure that the pupils from Bocholt had an eventful stay with their families. In addition to everyday school life in France, the German group got to see the many facets of the Auvergne region: Whether it was cheese production at an agricultural school with an associated microbiology cluster of excellence and its own herd of cattle, the history of the town around the important St. Géraud monastery, a sporting comparison in badminton, an inspiring dance theatre performance or a visit to a market-leading company in the snow clearing vehicle production segment.

Historical highlights in the Auvergne

The main highlights were the tour to the picturesque villages of Rocamadour and Collonges-la-Rouge and the weekend with the families. Both places are among the most beautiful villages in France and UNESCO World Heritage Sites and offered breathtaking views of the partner region. At the weekend, some families focussed on skiing in the nearby Monts du Cantal.

The group returned to Bocholt rich in experiences, which were further enhanced by a stop at the Eiffel Tower and Champs-Élysées. A return visit is already being planned.

Sponsorship

The student exchange was funded by the state initiative "Europa-Scheck" of the Minister for Federal and European Affairs, International Affairs and Media of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia. Further information can be found at <https://mbeim.nrw/europa-schecks>

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*Pupils from the Euregio-Gymnasium in Bocholt and the Lycée Emile Duclaux in Aurillac visited the French capital Paris, among other places, during their first exchange in 15 years.
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Pupils from Bocholt spent some eventful days in the French twin town of Aurillac.
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