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Europe/International

French school pupils from Aurillac visit Bocholt

First joint exchange with three secondary schools from our twin town // Exchange programme with Euregio-Gymnasium

From 15 to 19 June 2026, 46 pupils in Years 6 and 7 from three collèges in the French twin town of Aurillac visited Bocholt. The group was looked after by the Euregio-Gymnasium Bocholt, which has been running an exchange programme with the Lycée Émile Duclaux in Aurillac for many years.

An equal number of German pupils from the Euregio-Gymnasium took part in the exchange programme. The French guests were accommodated at the Europa-Haus Bocholt during their stay.

Interaction in everyday school life

To kick things off, the French guests were welcomed to the Euregio-Gymnasium by Headteacher Jan-Bernd Lepping. The young people then got to know the school, took part in lessons in small groups and struck up conversations with the Bocholt pupils during joint activities.

"A school exchange is much more than just an item on the school year's programme. It fosters genuine encounters, a curiosity about each other's languages and, often, friendships that last long after the visit is over", said Headteacher Jan-Bernd Lepping in his welcome address. He was particularly pleased that three French collèges were taking part in the first exchange of this kind.

Discovering Bocholt and the region

The programme offered the guests a wide range of insights into Bocholt and the region. These included, amongst other things, a school treasure hunt, language activities, a visit to the textile factory, a walk through the town forest and a joint visit to the Bahia. Bocholt's special location on the German-Dutch border was also brought to life through a visit to neighbouring Dutch communities.

The programme also included excursions to Münster and, on the return journey, a stop-off in Aachen. "We wanted to show the young people just how diverse Bocholt is: as a school town, as a European town and as a town right on the border", explained Frank Gassen, who organised the exchange at the Euregio-Gymnasium. "The collaboration with Anne Poulhes on the French side was characterised by a high degree of trust and commitment. Without such reliable partners, an exchange on this scale would not be possible", he added.

A first for the Bocholt-Aurillac town twinning

This form of exchange, involving several schools at the same time, took place for the first time as part of the Franco-German town twinning between Bocholt and Aurillac. Petra Taubach, the City of Bocholt's European Affairs Officer, emphasised the special significance of such youth exchanges: "Town twinning thrives on young people meeting one another. When pupils from Aurillac and Bocholt learn together, laugh together, discover their towns and engage in conversation with one another, Europe becomes a very tangible experience."

The visit demonstrates that the partnership between Bocholt and Aurillac remains vibrant and is being given new impetus through the commitment of the schools, teachers and young people.



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