

09. June 2023

Europe/International

## Higher subsidies for meetings with twin towns

### **Council amends guidelines // New: funding also for exchanges with the Netherlands**

As a European city on the German-Dutch border, Bocholt fosters active international understanding. The city maintains relations with five partner and two friendly cities as well as with neighbouring Dutch municipalities through the German-Dutch network "Grenzhoppers". At the last meeting, the city council decided to increase subsidies for meetings with these cities as of 1 June 2023.

The previous grant guidelines for trips to the friendly and twin towns were introduced in the 1980s. The amounts of the municipal grants for these trips have not changed since then, but were only adjusted when the euro was changed.

## **Grants for meetings with the Netherlands**

With the new grant guidelines for trips to the friendly and twin towns, the grant amounts have been increased in view of the increased costs and inflation. At the same time, a graduation of subsidies has been introduced to take into account the different distances to the friendly and twin towns. The new guideline has been supplemented by funding for meetings with the Dutch neighbouring municipalities of the German-Dutch network "Grenzhoppers".

## **Eligibility for funding**

Grants are awarded once a year to natural persons who have their main or secondary residence in the European City of Bocholt. Persons who do not have their residence in Bocholt only receive grants as members of Bocholt clubs, associations, institutions and other organisations and groups with a specific interest. Pupils, trainees or students can also receive grants. Grants depend on whether a meeting is held. Purely tourist trips are not funded.

## **Subsidy rates for individuals**

Citizens visiting the Belgian twin town of Bocholt or one of the neighbouring Dutch municipalities will in future receive 50 euros instead of 25 euros per person. For trips to the cities of Aurillac and Arpajon-sur-Cère (France), Rossendale (Great Britain), Akmene (Lithuania) and Vlora (Albania), the city will give 100 euros per person. Visitors to Wuxi (China) receive 200 euros per person on application.

## **Grants for bus costs**

The subsidies for groups of ten or more people travelling by bus, for example, to the friendly or twin towns have also been increased. For a visit to the neighbouring Dutch municipalities, groups receive a maximum travel allowance of 250 euros. 500 euros are paid for trips to Belgian Bocholt. A maximum of 1,500 euros can be claimed for trips to Aurillac, Arpajon-sur-Cère and Rossendale. The maximum grant for visits to the Lithuanian twin town of Akmene, the Albanian town of Vlora or the Chinese town of Wuxi, which is a friend of Bocholt, is 2,000 euros.

## **Appreciation of voluntary work**

With the increased subsidies for Bocholt groups and private individuals, the city of Bocholt is providing an incentive for the implementation of the partnership meetings that have been "run down" by Corona. At the same time, with this financial support, it would like to honour the high level of voluntary commitment that citizens invest in the partnership encounters.

## **Applications and information**

If you have any questions or would like to apply for funding under the new grant guidelines, please contact the City of Bocholt's European Affairs Officer, Petra Taubach, on tel. 02871 953-1286 or e-mail [petra.taubach\(at\)bocholt\(dot\)de](mailto:petra.taubach(at)bocholt(dot)de). Taubach recommends that groups seek advice on application formalities before travelling to one of the friendly or twin towns.



*View of Rossendale from the hill (Photo: City of Bocholt, Petra Taubach)  
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