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Europe/International

## **Official delegation visits Bocholt's Lithuanian twin town**

### **Invitation from Lithuania to the music festival // Further cultural and business programme was impressive**

A four-member delegation from Bocholt visited Bocholt's Lithuanian twin town Akmene. Since 14 May 2022, the Rajon Akmene has been the fifth official town twinning of the European city. The delegation, led by deputy mayor Gudrun Koppers, was invited to the local music festival "Akmenės smuikelis' 2023" on 10 June 2023, held in Akmene's nature and culture park.

Also taking part in the delegation trip were the city councillor Stefan Schmeink, the spokesperson of the "Town Twinning" project choir, Leo Heßling, and the European Affairs Officer of the City of Bocholt, Petra Taubach.

#### **Music and dance in the park**

The music festival "Akmenes smuikelis" takes place once a year. In the afternoon, several hundred dancers and musicians performed. They presented themselves in front of a packed audience in their typical national costumes. The singing was accompanied by traditional instruments.

#### **Twin towns of Akmene also in Lithuania**

The Lithuanian twin town had invited its entire international family to this music festival. Delegations came from Dobeles (Latvia), Konin (Poland), Viru - Nigula (Estonia), Mukowa (Japan) and Shidnycia (Ukraine). Unfortunately, the delegation from the eastern Ukrainian town of Shostka was unable to attend due to the war. Akmene concluded a cooperation agreement with the delegation from the Latvian neighbourhood of Dobeles this weekend. The signing took place publicly on the large stage square in the presence of all delegations and the public.

#### **Excursions and company visits**

The twin town Akmene had prepared a well-organised programme and cultural and business excursions for their European guests. Culinary insights rounded off the visit. The delegation returned to Bocholt with numerous impressions and many experiences.





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*f.l.t.r.: Stefan Schmeink, Vitalijus Mitrofanovas (Mayor of Akmene), Elisabeth Kroesen, Leo Heßling, Petra Taubach*



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*One of the many traditional dance groups in Akmene*