

Short term mobility 2025/2026:

Wilhelm Gymnasium (Braunschweig, Germany) and Osbeckgymnasiet (Laholm, Sweden)

“Microplastics and water pollution - a pan-European problem:

What to do with microplastics?

Where does it end up? And how do we want to deal with it? ”

RESULTS

Water analysis:

- Based on their measurements and observations, the participating students were able to successfully distinguish between oligotrophic, mesotrophic, and eutrophic waters. It became clear that they were not only able to interpret the results correctly, but also to recognize the connections between trophic level, nutrient load, and ecological impacts.
- The students were able to link these findings to specific water protection measures. In discussions and evaluation phases, measures such as the reduction of nutrient inputs, the protection of riparian zones, sustainable agriculture, and the importance of sewage treatment plants were addressed.

Microplastics:

- The analyses showed that microplastics could be detected in all of the water samples examined - regardless of whether they were oligotrophic, mesotrophic, or eutrophic waters and regardless of existing protective measures.
- This result was particularly striking for both groups of students, as it highlighted how ubiquitous microplastics have become in aquatic ecosystems. The realization that even seemingly unpolluted or protected waters are affected led to intense discussions about global causes, consumer behavior, waste management, and ways to avoid plastic waste.

International cooperation:

- The students successfully worked together in mixed teams across national borders, using a common non-native language as a means of communication. This not only promoted language skills, but also deepened important skills in the areas of teamwork, cooperation, and intercultural understanding.
- The project work required joint planning, coordination, documentation, presentation, and evaluation, which enabled the students to expand their communication and social skills.

Overall outcomes:

- The project not only strengthened technical skills in the field of water analysis, but also promoted environmental awareness and the ability to apply scientific results to real-world action.
- The project has made the urgency of the microplastics issue tangible and has raised the students' awareness of environmental problems in the long term.

- The project shows that the combination of practice-oriented environmental education and international cooperation has high educational value and enables sustainable learning experiences, both professionally and personally.