

EUROPEAN YOUTH ORCHESTRA 2026

REPORT

17-23 MAY 2026 BORDEAUX, FRANCE



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



RÉGION
Nouvelle-
Aquitaine



Acknowledgements

The organisers would like to thank:

- Rock School Barbey and in particular Jeff Poupet for hosting and supporting us during rehearsals.
- Bordeaux Info Jeunes, and specifically Lucia Cafaro for hosting us on Friday 22nd and the activities organized in the morning.
- The Nouveau Festival for the opportunity given to young artists to present their passions
- Erasmus+ as well as the Region Nouvelle-Aquitaine for funding this project

Index

- Acknowledgements 2
- Ligue de l’Enseignement 4
- LABA..... 6
- Partners..... 7
- European Youth Orchestra 8
- The Nouveau Festival..... 9
- European Youth Orchestra’s Schedule 202610
- Organisation11
- Sunday 17th of May12
- Monday 18th of May12
- Tuesday 19th of May16
- Wednesday 20th of May17
- Thursday 21th of May18
- Friday 22nd of May20
- Evaluation of the exchange22
- Saturday 23th of May25
- Future prospects for the next edition26
- Contact.....27

Ligue de l'Enseignement

National level

Ligue de l'Enseignement is an organisation founded on the principles of secularism, aiming to promote non-formal education through educational, cultural, and sporting activities. With 103 departmental federations, it brings together 30,000 local associations across 24,000 communes, representing 1.6 million members.

Its core values are **liberty, equality, and fraternity**, with **secularism** and **democracy** as its guiding principles. Its mission is to **educate and inform to inspire change**, with a focus on popular education and the ongoing engagement of participants.

Its four main areas of action are:

- **Education and training**
- **Culture**
- **Educational holidays and leisure activities**
- **Sport for all**

For the 500,000 volunteers and 18,000 civil service volunteers, joining the Ligue de l'Enseignement means:

- Learning **through and with others**
- Fostering **conviviality and fraternity**
- Building **solidarity and fighting inequality**
- Participating in a **democracy that includes all citizens**

Regional level

Ligue de l'Enseignement Nouvelle-Aquitaine (LENA) brings together 12 departmental federations that work to foster civic participation and promote a more egalitarian and tolerant society.

In line with its values, LENA implements actions across Nouvelle-Aquitaine, focusing on supporting socially, economically, and culturally disadvantaged populations. It empowers citizens to take an active role in democratic life at the regional, national, and European levels.

As part of its commitment to youth engagement and the promotion of a united and just Europe, LENA took part in the organisation of the **European Youth Orchestra 2026**.

For the **Ligue de l'Enseignement**, **Rita Silva Varisco** and **Toma Juneviciute** were responsible for the logistics, planning, and hosting of the orchestra in 2026.

LABA

Founded in 2013, **LABA** develops and co-produces projects that promote **inclusion, social innovation, gender equality, climate resilience, and civic engagement**. It operates primarily within the **creative and cultural industries** sector.

LABA leads projects in its areas of expertise in collaboration with both French and international partners. Comprising a core team and a network of collaborators, LABA works on initiatives related to the creative sector, including **performing arts, visual arts, tangible and intangible heritage, culinary arts, digital innovation, and cultural tourism**.

Margaux Velez and **Lou Masson** were responsible for **financial and administrative coordination**.

Partners

- Lycée Eugène Jamot d'Aubusson, Creuse, France [Website](#)
- Lycée Jean Renou La Réole, Gironde, France [Website](#)
- Lycée Les Iris, Lormont, Gironde, France [Website](#)
- Gymnasium Carolinum, Ansbach, Germany [Website](#)
- Oberstufengymnasium, Eschwege, Germany [Website](#)
- Liceul de Arte Dimitrie Cuclin, Romania [Website](#)
- Fondazione Scuola di Musica Carlo e Guglielmo Andreoli, Italy [Website](#)
- Gozo municipal committee, Malta [Website](#)



European Youth Orchestra

Objectives

The European Youth Orchestra aims to promote unity among young Europeans through the universal language of music. This objective was achieved by bringing together 54 young people and 10 supervisors from Italy, Germany, France, Malta, and Romania.

During their time together, the participants performed music as an orchestra and took part in the Nouveau Festival, which highlighted the talents of local youth. To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Nouveau Festival, a group of young documentary filmmakers from Lycée Jean Renou (La Réole) and Lycée Eugène Jamot (Aubusson), France, followed the project throughout the week, capturing rehearsals, performances, intercultural exchanges, and everyday moments to create a documentary highlighting the participants' experience and the impact of this European adventure. They also had the opportunity to learn about the European Union and reflect on their role within it as young citizens.

The European Youth Orchestra also strives to foster intercultural exchange and learning, which was made possible through a variety of intercultural activities held throughout their stay in Bordeaux.

The Nouveau Festival

Created in 2017 by the Nouvelle-Aquitaine Region, the Nouveau Festival is a festive and cultural event held over two days. It showcases the talents of high school students from across the region in a wide variety of artistic and cultural disciplines. The festival also encourages civic engagement by offering young people the opportunity to volunteer in support of their peers.


The 10th edition of the Nouveau Festival took place on May 20th and 21st 2026, at the Rocher de Palmer (Cenon), bringing together over 2,000 high school students and apprentices from across the region, along with young participants from abroad.

Throughout the year, students from schools across the region prepared projects in disciplines such as visual arts, dance, fashion, music, photography, science and technology, theatre, and more.

The festival took place both inside the Rocher de Palmer and around it, in the Parc de Palmer.

The European Youth Orchestra performed at 2 p.m. in Room 1200 on May 21st

European Youth Orchestra's Schedule 2026

							
		<h1>SCHEDULE</h1> <p>European Orchestra Bordeaux</p>					
		MONDAY 18th MAY	TUESDAY 19th MAY	WEDNESDAY 20th MAY	THURSDAY 21st MAY	FRIDAY 22nd MAY	
DAY TRIP	SUNDAY 17 TH MAY	MORNING					DAY TRIP
		Rockschool 8h30 - 8h50 Journey from the hotel to the Rockscool Barbey on foot/tram	Rockscool 8h30 - 8h50 Journey from the hotel to the Rockscool Barbey on foot/tram	Rockscool 8h30-8h50 Journey from the hotel to the Rockscool Barbey on foot/tram	Rocher de Palmer 8h30-8h50 Journey from the hotel to the Rockscool Barbey on foot/tram	Esplanade MEBA 9h30 Journey from the hotel to CRJU by foot/tram	
		9h00 - 9h25 Welcome in the Rockscool	9h00 - 12h15 Musicians' rehearsal	9h00 - 12h15 Musicians' rehearsal	9h00 - 11h00 Musicians' rehearsal	10h30 - 12h30 European games at CRJU	
		9h30 - 12h15 Musicians' rehearsal	12h30 - 13h00 Journey from the Rockscool Barbey to the Rocher de Palmer (tram)	12h30 - 13h00 LUNCH at the festival	12h00 - 13h00 LUNCH at the festival	12h30 - 13h30 LUNCH at CRJU (picnic)	
		12h30 Lunch at Gustave Eiffel	12h30 Lunch at Gustave Eiffel	13h00 - 14h00 LUNCH at the festival	12h00 - 13h00 LUNCH at the festival	12h30 - 13h30 LUNCH at CRJU (picnic)	
	AFTERNOON						
	Rockscool 14h00 - 17h30 Musicians' rehearsal + Walk back to the hotel	Rockscool 14h30 - 17h30 Musicians' rehearsal	Rocher de Palmer 14h00 - 18h00 Nouveau Festival	Rocher de Palmer 13h00 - 14h00 Installation of the Orchestra & Balance	Center of Bordeaux 13h30 - 17h00 Free time		
	19h30 Dinner at Hotel Eklo	18h30 - 19h30 Dinner at Rockscool	20h00 Dinner at "Nom d'une crêpe"	14h00 - 15h00 Concert	17h00 - 18h30 Evaluation (young people and partners) and Youthpass		
	EVENING						
	Intercultural night - Eklo Bordeaux	20h00 - 21h00 Musicians' rehearsal - Open to the public + walk back to the hotel		19h00 - 20h30 Dinner at the Ploucs	20h00 - 22h00 Dinner at Hotel Eklo		
	End of day review						
					Goodbye Night :)		

Organisation

To ensure clarity regarding the programme, contacts, and logistics, **LENA** prepared an **infopack**, which was sent to all partners prior to arrival.

A **shared drive** containing all documents related to the project—including participant details and pedagogical materials—was used throughout the preparation phase.

A **WhatsApp group** for adult leaders and organisers was also created to facilitate communication throughout the week.

Sunday 17th of May

Place: Hotel Eklo, Bordeaux

The participants arrived at the Eklo Hotel at different times, between 6:30 p.m. and 1:00 a.m. The LENA team was present to welcome them and answer any questions.

Monday 18th of May



Place: Rock School Barbey, Bordeaux

The participants were welcomed by the teams from LENA and Rock School Barbey, including Jeff, Felix Lacoste (the conductor), and the professional musicians. Toma and Rita opened the session by presenting an overview of the programme, outlining the goals and activities planned for the week.

Felix Lacoste, conductor and composer of the orchestra's musical arrangements, introduced himself and shared the history of the orchestra and of Rock School Barbey, where rehearsals would take place over the coming days. He also introduced the featured artist, Amy

Winehouse, explaining that she was chosen in recognition of her lasting influence on many contemporary female artists. The orchestra performed eight adaptations of Amy Winehouse's songs: *Rehab*, *Back to Black*, *Love Is a Losing Game*, *You Know I'm No Good*, *Stronger Than Me*, *Valerie*, *F**k Me Pumps*, and *He Can Only Hold Her*. As this year's musicians performed exceptionally well, Felix added a ninth piece to the program: an adaptation of *Bad Guy* by Billie Eilish, which had been performed the previous year.

This introductory session was also an opportunity to meet the professional musicians who would accompany the young performers throughout the week:

- Michel Hoareau – guitar
- Nicolas Martin – bass
- Jérôme Martineau Ricotti – drums
- Victor Moïse – keyboards
- Élodie Robine – violin



Following the welcome and introductions, Toma facilitated ice-breaking games to help participants — as well as the musicians and conductor — get to know each other and start building a sense of community.

After the games, the first rehearsal began! Participants tried out their instruments — some brought from home by train or plane, others lent by Rock School Barbey — and began revisiting the music. The sessions were animated by exchanges in English, but also in French, Maltese, German, Italian, and Romanian, with the LENA team providing translation when needed.



At midday, the LENA team accompanied the group to lunch at the canteen of Lycée Gustave Eiffel, chosen for its proximity to the rehearsal venue and its balanced, healthy meals. This canteen provided catering for Monday, May 18th, and Tuesday, May 19th.

In the afternoon, rehearsals continued with the young musicians becoming increasingly confident and beginning to feel like a true orchestra.

As part of the planned programme, LENA had informed partners ahead of time about an intercultural evening on May 18th, held at the Eklo Hotel after dinner. Participants were invited to bring food and drinks from their home countries and prepare music to share.

The evening featured traditional music performances, instrumental exchanges, and dance demonstrations, creating a warm and joyful atmosphere. Participants not only shared their cultures but also taught each other dances, turning the evening into a true celebration of intercultural exchange and connection.

The intercultural evening was a great success and provided an opportunity to build bridges between countries and cultures.



Tuesday 19th of May

Place: Rock School Barbey

On Tuesday, the participants began the day with cooperative games led by Toma, helping to build trust and team spirit within the group.

They then rehearsed in instrumental sections for the rest of the morning, focusing on refining their parts and strengthening coordination within each group.

After lunch at Lycée Gustave Eiffel, the orchestra came back together for a full-group rehearsal that continued until 5:30 p.m.

Participants were then given some free time to rest or take a walk around the neighbourhood before dinner.

LENA arranged for dinner to be delivered to Rock School Barbey, ensuring that the musicians could enjoy a warm and comforting meal just before the evening's big moment: the public rehearsal.

The public rehearsal was hosted by Yasmina Boultam, regional government official in charge of educational ambition and territories, who thanked young people for taking part in a musical and human adventure. Invitations were sent to elected officials, cultural institutions, associations and family and friends of the young musicians.

Around 100 people attended, marking the first time the orchestra performed in front of an audience — a significant and exciting milestone in the week's programme.



Wednesday 20th of May

Place:

Morning: Rock School Barbey, Bordeaux

Afternoon: Rocher de Palmer, Cenon

The day began with a group rehearsal in the morning. After the session, the group took the tram from Rock School Barbey to the Rocher de Palmer, the venue of the Nouveau Festival.

Lunch was provided by the Nouveau Festival, giving the group a chance to rest and recharge before continuing their discovery of the event.

All participants had the opportunity to explore the festival and its activities, getting a sense of the atmosphere and layout ahead of the concert scheduled for the following day.

One of the musicians had the opportunity to be transformed into Amy Winehouse with the help of the apprentice hairdressers at the Nouveau Festival.



In the evening, the participants travelled by public transport to the restaurant *Nom d'une Crêpe* — a perfect occasion to experience traditional French cuisine.

The group thoroughly enjoyed the crêpe-based meal, with many of them tasting this French specialty for the first time!

Thursday 21th of May

Place : Rocher de Palmer, Cenon

The morning began with a final full orchestra rehearsal until 10:45 a.m. Afterwards, the group took the tram to Rocher de Palmer. Lunch was provided by the Nouveau Festival.

At 1:00 p.m., the orchestra gathered on stage in Salle 1200 to prepare and complete the sound check for the concert.



Yasmina Boultam, a regional councillor for Nouvelle-Aquitaine in charge of educational ambition and territories, and Cécile Bienes, Youth and Citizenship Director of Nouvelle-Aquitaine region, welcomed the young musicians and thanked them for participating in this musical and human adventure.



The concert was a great success, with nearly 1000 young people cheering and applauding enthusiastically!



After the concert, the entire group took a commemorative photo, and representatives from each delegation gave several interviews sharing their experiences as part of the European Youth Orchestra.



The Nouvelle-Aquitaine region also expressed its gratitude by presenting each delegation with gifts.



Friday 22nd of May

Place: [Info Jeunes](#) Bordeaux

The last day of the program.

Some groups took the opportunity to discover Bordeaux by boat, using the Batcub to cross the river and arrive at the Bordeaux Info Jeunes building by 10:00 a.m. There, they participated in activities focused on the diversity of European cultures, led by Lucia Cafaro, Europe and International Activities Coordinator at the Centre Régional Info Jeunes.

After the morning activities, LENA had arranged packed lunches so that the participants could enjoy some free time to explore Bordeaux from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.



Participants also evaluated the overall experience — including group dynamics, logistics, intercultural learning, and more — by positioning themselves in red, orange, yellow or green zones and explaining their choices.

Accommodation

Key strengths

- Accommodation was highly appreciated overall, especially by adults, and many recommended keeping the same venue.

Main improvements needed

- Rooms were considered too small.
- Insufficient bathroom facilities, particularly the low number of showers.

Food

Main concerns

- Insufficient food quantity throughout the week, leaving some participants hungry.
- Lack of variety, especially for vegetarians and non-meat eaters.
- Food quality was criticized (hotel catering, pasta quality, repeated fish meals).

Positive aspect

- Meals in external restaurants were well received.

Transport & Travel

Main concerns

- Overcrowded public transport.
- Flight delays and travel difficulties for the Maltese group.
- Some German participants lost personal belongings while travelling.

Positive aspect

- Overall transport arrangements were satisfactory for most participants.

Rock School Barbey

Main concerns

- Poor cleanliness (toilets and floors).
- Lack of ventilation and excessive heat caused discomfort.
- Insufficient lighting for musicians.

Positive aspect

- Félix, catering services and afternoon snacks received excellent feedback.

Free Time & Activities

Key strengths

- Participants appreciated the amount of free time and opportunities to socialize.
- Adults particularly enjoyed exploring the city in the evenings.

Main improvements needed

- The first days felt too intensive and the curfew was considered too early (11 pm).
- Participants wanted more sightseeing, leisure activities, and a longer project duration.

Group Dynamics & Atmosphere

Key strengths

- Excellent atmosphere throughout the week.
- Strong and rapid bonding between participants from different countries.
- Staff support was highly appreciated, particularly Lena and Laba.

Main improvement needed

- Better management of nighttime noise and clearer introductions at the start of the project.

Filming Experience

Main concerns

- Cameras sometimes created stress and affected concentration.
- The purpose of the filming was not always clearly explained.
- The video team struggled to integrate socially due to their workload.

Positive aspect

- Participants appreciated having lasting memories of the project through the video documentation.

Overall Priorities for Future Editions

1. Improve food quality, quantity and vegan options.
2. Improve Rock School Barbey facilities (bathrooms, cleanliness, ventilation).
3. Strengthen social integration, especially between the video crew (youth) and musicians (youth), while allowing more time for group activities and sightseeing.



After the end of the evaluation LABA and LENA delivered the Youthpass certificates. Once everyone had finally received their Youthpass certificates, the group took a photo and then went for dinner at the hotel Eklo.



Saturday 23th of May

The departure day for the orchestra. Participants left the hotel in the morning.

Future prospects for the next edition

The evaluation confirmed the strong impact of the European Youth Orchestra on participants and partners, who expressed their motivation to take part in future editions.

For 2027, particular attention will be given to improving catering, participant comfort, and rehearsal conditions. The organisers will also explore opportunities to provide more sightseeing activities, informal social time.

The documentary component was highly appreciated as a way of preserving memories of the project. However, the evaluation highlighted the challenge of connecting the orchestra and documentary projects. Some participants felt that the purpose of the filming could have been explained more clearly, while members of the video team found it difficult to balance their responsibilities with social interaction. Future editions will seek to strengthen the links between both groups and ensure a better understanding of the documentary process from the beginning of the project.

Participants were invited to suggest artists and musical styles for future editions. Their ideas will help inspire the artistic direction of the next European Youth Orchestra and ensure the project continues to meet the expectations of young people across Europe.

Contact

[Website Nouveau Festival](#)

[Website Europe en Nouvelle-Aquitaine](#)

[instagram](#)