

**РОЛЬ МЕЖДУНАРОДНОГО СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВА
В ИННОВАЦИОННОМ РАЗВИТИИ
УНИВЕРСИТЕТА И РЕГИОНА
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Ursula Reutner

Germany, Passau, University of Passau

**INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AS A KEY FACTOR
IN UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT – AS ILLUSTRATED
BY THE PASSAU – IVANOVO PARTNERSHIP**

The article is devoted to the analysis of the milestones of cooperation between the University of Passau and Ivanovo State University, the main directions of partner work are demonstrated. The author expresses the confidence in further successful development of partnership between Passau and Ivanovo universities.

Key words: Agreement on cooperation, the University of Passau, Ivanovo State University.

У. Ройтнер

**МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЕ СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВО КАК
КЛЮЧЕВОЙ ФАКТОР РАЗВИТИЯ УНИВЕРСИТЕТА
НА ПРИМЕРЕ СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВА ИВАНОВА И ПАССАУ**

Проанализированы вехи сотрудничества университета Пассау и Ивановского государственного университета, освещены основные направления партнерской работы. Автор выражает уверенность в дальнейшем успешном развитии партнерских отношений между университетами Пассау и Иваново.

Ключевые слова: Договор о сотрудничестве, университет Пассау, Ивановский государственный университет.

Two cities with hidden similarities

Ivanovo and Passau – at first sight these two cities have little in common: Ivanovo has recently turned 140 and boasts a population of some 400,000; and Passau, with a history stretching back to pre-Roman Celtic times, has a population that only amounts to one-eighth that of Ivanovo. But looking past the superficial, one finds many commonalities. For one, both cities are host to cultural festivals of international importance. To pick out just two examples: The Zerkalo International Film Festival in Ivanovo, which has been held annually since 2007 and regularly attracts famous international actors and directors from all over the world, as well as offering budding film directors a stage to showcase their work. In Passau, the biggest annual festival is the *Europäische Wochen* – which translates to 'European Weeks' – a festival of classical music and theatre that brings international symphonic orchestras, classical ensembles, theatre companies and artists from Germany, Europe and further afield to Passau for approximately six weeks every summer.

Both universities developed along similar lines

In such culturally rich environments, it is clear that the universities established in the two cities would have a strong cultural orientation. Indeed, both universities share similar teaching and research interests and have grown from institutions with a core focus on teacher education programmes to more diversified universities offering degree programmes in economics, law, sociology, foreign language studies, linguistics, literature, philosophy, history, mathematics and computer science. East European Studies are well-represented in Passau, with language courses in Russian and other Slavic languages and two Chairs dedicated to this academic discipline – the Chair of Slavic Literatures and Cultures, held by Professor Uffelmann, and the Chair of Modern and Contemporary History of Eastern Europe and its Cultures, which is held by Professor Wunsch. This orientation is also reflected in our student body: Russian students form the second-largest group of international students at the University of Passau.

Initial contact and conclusion of the partnership agreement

With the above in mind, one could say it was inevitable that Ivanovo State University and the University of Passau would cross

paths one day. And so it came that, following a number of high-powered visits from both universities from 1988 onwards – in which Dr Höcherl and the late Professor Karl-Heinz Pollok proved instrumental in preparing the ground for the multifaceted co-operation between State University Ivanovo and the University of Passau – the two universities entered into a partnership agreement. The signing ceremony took place on 11 January 1990, with State University Ivanovo represented by its Rector, Professor V. N. Latyshev, and the University of Passau by its President, Professor K. H. Pollok.

In the following years, there were regular reciprocal visits by the heads of both universities – an expression of the warmth and personal friendships that have always characterised the partnership – both during the presidency of Professor Pollok, and particularly between his successor, President Walter



Schweitzer, and the incumbent Rector Egorov and Vice Rector for International Relations Usoltseva. However,

From left to right: Professor Mühlek, Vice Rector Bibikov, Vice Rector Sh'eglov, Rector Latyshev, Minister President Dr. Streibl and President Pollok meet in Passau in April 1990.
Source: *Nachrichten und Berichte*, May 1990.

the relationship between the two universities would not have been the same without the untiring efforts of Professor Kuprijanovskij, Mr Rosanov and Dr Höcherl, who continued to teach at Ivanovo until well after his retirement from the University of Passau in 2000.

At Passau, the professors who accepted overall responsibility for the partnership and did much to strengthen the relations between Passau and Ivanovo were the late Professor Helmut Schmalen (Chair of Business Administration and Marketing) and, more recently, Professor Dirk Uffelmann, who holds the Chair of Slavic Literatures and Cultures.

The characteristics of the partnership between the two universities

Under the agreement, members of all four faculties of the University of Passau – Law, Business & Economics, Arts & Humanities and Computer Science & Mathematics – as well as two of our central units, the Language Centre and the Computer Centre, are eligible for exchanges within the partnership. The agreement covers student exchanges, exchanges of academics and lecturers, and intensive language courses for students.

The agreement provides for five students from Ivanovo to come to Passau in August every year to complete an intensive German language course with German Courses Passau (GCP), the unit of the University of Passau that administers the paid German language courses for non-matriculated students who wish to gain a German language certificate to study in Germany. In return, Passau can send five of its students to Ivanovo to complete one of its excellent and rigorous intensive Russian language and culture courses in March or September. At Passau, these exchanges are currently supervised by Dr Johannes Merklinger, Lecturer of Russian at the Language Centre.

These exchanges are free of charge for students at the partner universities, as they are supported by funding programmes from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the national agency promoting international exchanges of German higher education institutions. Moreover, the five students coming to Passau are additionally awarded a DAAD scholarship to cover their living expenses while in Germany.

To date, some 83 students from Passau have made use of the opportunity to study language and culture at Ivanovo, which undoubtedly has provided them with memories they will cherish for a lifetime and, equally importantly, transversal skills that will give them an edge on the international job markets.

Aside from the intensive language courses, the partnership allows matriculated students to study academic non-language courses at the partner university for one or more semesters, which then count towards their degree studies at their home university. As with the intensive language courses, study abroad is free for all students from the

respective partner university, as both universities have agreed to waive their tuition fees.

Work programmes and notable activities

Right from the start of the partnership in 1990, annual work programme contracts were concluded to complement and further refine the provisions of the partnership agreement, stipulating specific projects and joint activities between the two universities. These would specify, for instance, how many students could partake in each other's language courses, which academics would be seconded to the partner university that year, what conferences would be held with the participation of the respective other party, and of course, when the visits by the Rector, President and the various delegations would take place.

In addition to the annual language course exchanges, which follow a regular timetable and have always been received with much enthusiasm from students, a number of significant visits and academic exchanges took place over the years:

In the period 2004–2007, the law faculties co-operated closely, with lecturers from Passau and Ivanovo teaching at the respective partner university and the Dean of Ivanovo's Law Faculty, Professor Kuzmina, visiting to discuss the future collaboration between the two faculties.

In 2006, Professor Sokolova of Ivanovo's Law Faculty gave a series of lectures at Passau. This was, furthermore, the first year in which the Russian language course at Ivanovo was attended additionally by students from the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice (Czech Republic), with whom Passau also co-operates closely.

2007 was a very eventful year for the partnership: The University of Passau was delighted to welcome a top-level delegation headed by Rector Egorov, which included two Vice Rectors and two Deans, to discuss an extension of the agreement to allow Ivanovo's doctoral students to complete internships at Passau. In January, Professor Milovskaya of Ivanovo's German Philology Department and the Head of the International Relations Office visited Passau to deliver a series of lectures and, respectively, to explore issues concerning language tuition under the partnership agreement and gauge the level of demand

for the International School of Russian Language and Culture programme planned for summer that year. In the same year, Passau's professors Martin Fincke (Criminal Law and Procedure and Eastern European Law) of the Faculty of Law and Klaus Dittmar Haase (Chair of Taxation) of the Faculty of Business Administration & Economics visited Ivanovo on separate occasions.

2008 saw exchanges at the administrative level between both International Offices and in 2010, 15 students of the German Studies programme in Ivanovo visited Passau under the supervision of Dr Opolovnikova to complete a practical placement.

One recent highlight of the partnership was Professor Robert Esser's highly successful Russo-German seminar in 2013, for which the delegation from Ivanovo in April consisted of 10 scholars, followed by a return visit by 12 academics from Passau. Professor Esser holds the Chair of German, European and International Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure and White-Collar Crime.

Finally, in 2013 the new President, Professor Burkhard Freitag, visited Ivanovo State University, and in 2014 Rector Egorov reciprocated the visit. Both presidents have a good personal friendship which helps to carry the tradition of this partnership into the future.

A lively relationship with great future potential

As can be seen from the above, the partnership is alive and well and, for the University of Passau, forms an important part of the University's aspiration to foster debate and encourage communication between East and West.

We are confident that the Passau – Ivanovo partnership will continue to flourish and that both institutions will carry on providing invaluable linguistic and cultural expertise as well as contributing an unforgettable chapter to the lives of those university members who elect to complete a language course, semester or longer period of study or work in Ivanovo or Passau.