6 To Russia with Love

Pär Widén

Associate professor and Head of department at the Faculty of Education and Society, Malmö University.

This international mobility project between an old well-established university in Russia and our 15-year-young university in Malmö turned out very successfully, and the studies in the humanities in combination with language and culture studies within subjects like Swedish, Swedish as a second language, and English helped us to find the potential to add intercultural and international perspectives to teacher education. The multilingual approach and multi-subject collaboration between the staff was part of this added value.

Internationalisation is a crucial aspect within all curricula and policies of our teacher education. This collaboration project made it possible for teacher educators and teacher students from different knowledge disciplines to collectively take part in this joint venture. This certainly deepened the quality of the courses that we offered within this exchange as well as the quality of language teacher education at Malmö University as a whole. Having students and staff experiencing a completely different learning setting and as a consequence having to adapt to new learning cultures, truly furthered the language learning process and our thoughts on language acquisition.
From the perspective as an employer and as head of department at Malmö University, this also widened the learning scope within the department’s teaching staff and knitted the different academic disciplines closer together. This new way of collaborating was made possible both within and outside of the department, at our faculty and with partners outside the University. We truly learned from this exchange project with Russia and Saint Petersburg, and we hope that we can find forms of continuing our cooperation.