

School of Social Studies

Annual Activity Report 1999

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Vice-deans:	Assoc. Prof. PhDr. Petr Macek, CSc. Assoc. Prof. PhDr. Ladislav Rabušic, CSc. PhDr. Csaba Szaló, Ph.D.
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Secretary:	Ing. Vojtěch Moštěk

The School of Social Studies entered its second year of existence and places a strong emphasis on a number of activities. There are two research projects which currently have topmost priority: *Ethnicities, Minorities and Marginalized Groups* and *Children, Youth and the Family in Transformation*. These projects are being researched in co-operation with other departments and research centres in the Czech Republic and abroad. The former is long-term interdisciplinary research in minorities, which attempts to specify the basic characteristics of minorities living in the Czech Republic as well as the psychological and social factors influencing their social status and their coexistence with the majority, with the main emphasis is placed on the Roma ethnic group. The latter project investigates the social trends of the transformation of the Czech family, the principles of the mental and social development of children and youth (old age to be included later), utilizing the research capacities of human environmentalistics and the body of knowledge in the social and psychological aspects of the life of minorities and ethnic and marginalized groups. An integral part of these research schemes is work on an international project focusing on the teaching of the study of ethnic minorities within regular teaching programmes (the Jan Hus Foundation), complex research on the subject of Roma children and families in Brno and Ostrava (the British Know-How Fund), work on research into the effects of social benefits and on a project entitled *The Failure of Social Politics* (both funded by grants from the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic). All departments and research institutes are moreover involved in projects related to their academic and research profiles. There were 31 grants allocated to the School of Social Studies, including nine from the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic, eight from the Jan Hus Educational Foundation, and four from the Open Society Fund.

Alongside research, members of the School were also involved in matters of a more administrative nature: the School held the international conferences *Systems in Transition* (in February) and *The Reality and Risks of Social Exclusion* (in November). Faculty members also participated in a conference entitled *Nationalist Parties in Europe* (organized by the MU International Institute of Political Science), worked on expert committees of grant agencies (thirteen Czech agencies and one foreign) and on the committees of professional societies (seven in the Czech Republic and one abroad). Academic staff of the School of Social Studies continued to provide expert opinions requested by central institutions, last year involving nine researchers. The Faculty played host to many interesting visitors: last year, there were discussions with Jakub Puchalský, Vladimír Železný, Ivo Mathé and Magda Vášáryová.

As far as teaching activities are concerned, the most significant achievement last year was the introduction of programmes of combined study (so far, five Bc. study programmes comprising two subjects). These study programmes are especially appropriate for working people, who by this means can

gain the qualifications they require, and were greatly sought after. To accommodate public demand, anew subject called *International Relations and European Studies* was introduced (taught predominantly by the Department of Political Science). In accordance with efforts to correlate the local standards of university education with European ones, all courses offered within the study programmes of the School of Social Studies were accredited and so called eurocredits are being introduced, enabling the comparison of study achievements in a European context. The number of applications for study at the School of Social Studies increased again: there were 4,061 applications for the *Bc.* study programmes, while 237 *Bc.* graduates applied for study in *Mgr.* programmes. Unfortunately, only 244 *Bc.* students and 102 *Mgr.* students could be accepted.

International co-operation at the School took the form of joint research projects and inter-university agreements and programmes, as well as personal contacts. As part of the TEMPUS S JEP programme, the School organized supervisory study trips to the University of Ulster in Londonderry for V. Smékal and to St. Loye's School of Occupational Therapy for J. Volná, which enabled five students to study at this school. Two students of this school came to study at the School of Social Studies in exchange.

Ten students went on study trips abroad as part of the SOCRATES-ERASMUS programme (to Jena, Roskilde, Driebergen and Lillehammer), as did two teachers (to Amsterdam and Tillburg). For next year, exchange agreements have been signed with the universities of Roskilde, Jena, Roma, Driebergen, Lillehammer, Tillburg and Leuven, enabling 15 students to go on study trips. Inter-university agreements also made it possible for Prof. Keller to deliver a lecture series at the University of Rennes. Eight more members went on extended study trips and to give lecture series during the year. A number of foreign guests gave lectures at the School of Social Studies: Xu Yaokui from the Beijing Institute of Journalism and Communication, Ellen Hume Shattuck from the USA, Robert Braun from the Economic University of Budapest, Prof. Robert Saciuk and Dr. Stanislava Witkowski from the University of Wroclaw, Dr. C. A. Lewis from the University of Ulster, Prof. Pavel Machotka from the University of California, Prof. Thomas Stewart from SUNY and Prof. Michal Buchowski from Poznań. Teresa Sasinski-Klas and Tomasz Goban-Klas delivered lectures as part of the *The Ethics of Journalism* grant programme. Twenty-one undergraduate students from SSEES, London, spent their autumn semester in Brno, where they took courses consisting of lectures in the social and political reality and problems of post-communist countries and a course in Czech language. This programme has been running for five years.

Last year, members of the School published 21 monographs, 23 almanacs (four of which were published abroad), 36 original works appearing in journals (nine abroad), and other texts that include textbooks, teaching texts and popular titles. The Department of Mass Media and Journalism has done important work in co-operation with the Czech TV and radio. There are also books by members of the school which require a mention: I. Možný's *Why So Easily* and his *Sociology of the Family: Its Developments, Theory and Fundamental Issues*, P. Barša's *Political Theory of Multiculturalism*, P. Mareš's *Sociology of Inequality and Poverty*, P. Barša's and M. Strmiska's *The Nation State and Ethnic Conflicts*, I. Plaňava's *Marriage and Families: Structure, Dynamics, Communication*, or a collection of essays under the title *Christian and Conservative Parties and European Integration*, edited by M. Mareš and P. Fiala.

In conclusion, some mention has to be made of prizes and awards received: Prof. Ivo Možný was awarded honorary membership of the Czech Learned Society in Prague and in the Europäische Akademie der Wissenschaften und Künste in Vienna, Prof. Hana Librová received the Josef Vavroušek Prize, awarded by the Charta 77 Foundation, and Prof. Jan Keller obtained the Prize of the Minister of Environment of the Czech Republic for 1999.