

School of Social Studies

Annual Activity Report 2001

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In terms of the science, research and international co-operation, the fourth year of the independent existence of the School of Social Studies (SoSS) at Masaryk University can be characterized by the following aspects.

In research and development, the present high-priority areas at SoSS are *Ethnicities, Minorities and Marginalized Groups in the Czech Republic* and *Children, Youth and Family in Transformation*. These projects have been researched in co-operation with other organisations in this country and abroad.

The former, represented not only by the departments but also by the activities of the School's *Institute for Social Issues*, is a long-term inter-disciplinary project into the status of minorities and marginalized groups living in the Czech Republic (with an emphasis on issues connected with the Roma population) and their co-existence with the majority population. The latter project investigates the social trends of the transformation of the Czech family and principles of the mental and social developments of children and the youth. Its important part is an international project *The Value of the Child and the Solidarity between the generations*.

An important role in research at the School is played by *The Centre for research into personality formation in ethnic and social contexts*. In addition to the Centre's headquarters that runs and co-ordinates activities of five different teams, four of which are outside the MU campus, the School also houses the *Institute of Research into Children, Youth and Family*, participating in two long-term research projects of psychological and social development of children and adolescents.

Research projects also involve co-operation in international projects. One of them is the *Improvement of relationships between the Roma and Czech communities* project, financially supported from the PHARE funds, which is a probe into inter-ethnic relationships.

International co-operation at the School took place mainly through grant-supported research, where individual School departments carried out research more closely related to their particular academic and research profiles. There were a total of 25 grants allocated to the School in 2001, 14 of which were from the GA CR, one from HEDF, 4 from the Jan Huss Foundation, 2 from the Open Society Fund, one from the Jean Monet Project, etc.

Members of the SoSS helped to organise several international conferences. Together with the International Institute of Political Science of Masaryk University and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, the department of political science organized a conference on *Conservative Liberal and Christian*

Political Parties in Europe, the department of sociology organized a conference on *Identities in Conflict and Conflicts in Identities*. With the assistance of the Slovak Institute of International Studies in Bratislava, the international seminar *Prevention of racially motivated conflicts* was organized. The conference on *Psychological Issues of Adolescence* was organized with the assistance of the Institute of Psychology of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic and the department of psychology of the MU Faculty of Education.

A number of events at the School were organized on the basis of university agreements and programmes. The SOCRATES programme made it possible to implement agreements for student study stays in institutions of higher education in Edinburgh, Jena, Roskilde, Driebergen, Vienna, Lovani, Utrecht, Freiburg and Copenhagen. Throughout the year, a number of School members went on individual study stays and lecture visits.

The SoSS also organized a study stay in Brno for groups of students of Bachelor programmes from SSEES in London (autumn semester). The students attended a course on the social and political issues of post-communist countries.

As in every previous year, numerous guests from abroad gave lectures at the SoSS: S. Capek (Conway), S. Davis (Madison), R. Bobrowski a L. Zasztowt (Warsaw), H. Maier (Tübingen), P. Semmler (Poznaň), G. Sonntag (Dresden), H. J. Veen (Bonn), James Russell (USA), lama J. Lekshey (representative of the Tibetan school SAKYA) and L. Prinčič (Slovenia).

Members of the School worked in field boards of grant agencies (17 Czech and 2 foreign) and in expert committees of learned societies (12 Czech and 6 foreign). Expert opinions for central government bodies, which in 2001 were provided by nine teacher of the School, have become a tradition.

Last year, School members published 5 monographs, 67 original almanacs (10 of which abroad) and 65 articles (10 of which abroad) and a number of other publications (textbooks, teaching texts, etc.) The books published were e.g. the monograph *Political System in Russia. Search for a State* (J. Holzer), *Where have all the children gone* (L. Rabušic), *Overview of the Psychology of the Personality* (V. Smékal), and *Lethal Patriotism. Ethnic and Political Terrorism in the Basque Province and Quebec* (M. Strmiska). The co-operation between the department of mass-media studies and journalism and the Czech Television and Czech radio is of particular interest.

As far as teaching activities in 2001 were concerned, the most significant achievement was the successful re-accreditation of all degree programmes and branches, and the extension of the list of accredited post-gradual programmes to include courses given in English. The School also launched a programme of life-long education. This programme of combined studies with tuition fees paid by the students does not lead to an academic degree. Under certain conditions, however, participants may transfer to a (combined) form of state-sponsored Bachelor's degree programme.