

Activities that ASSSU has organized / participated in

### **Research Trainings**

Connecting university students with the labour market being one of the main objectives of ASSSU, the organization strives to find, organise and spread information about research trainings for students of sociology and related disciplines. In the spring of 2007 we successfully organised and carried out an empirical training programme for our students in 4 different programmes of one of the largest and most reputable NGO's - the Open Society Institute in Sofia.

ASSSU partnered the OSI in yet another activity – the project "Access to Justice: Preliminary Initiation of the 'Legal Assistance Bureau' Model". Sociology students were involved in the preliminary survey aimed at finding out how adequate legal assistance is in Bulgaria. They took part in the preparation of the interview guides and the fieldwork all over Bulgaria.

The broader aim behind the organisation of empirical trainings was to integrate them into the BA Sociology course curriculum, and ensuring that sociology students could participate in research trainings every year. In 2007 ASSSU applied for funding with a project aimed at making the trainings a regular activity and part of the curriculum, equivalent to other courses. Unfortunately, this project did not receive funding.

### **Other Projects**

With the partnership of the Department of Sociology at the Sofia University and Zentrum für Evaluation und Methoden der Universität Bonn, between 2005 and 2007 ASSSU carried out a study as a part of the international project "Successful Studying of the Students Abroad – The Example of Bulgaria". The Association also took part in the preparation and the implementation of the field work. Several of our members wrote reports and sociological analyses which are soon to appear in a volume of articles edited by Prof. Tanya Chavdarova (currently in preparation).

Also, as an organization with long-term goals and visions in the field of sociological research, ASSSU has recently begun collecting its own archive of sociological literature and important research materials that will be invaluable for future research activities of the young sociologists in Bulgaria.

### **Seminars and Discussions**

Throughout the year 2007, ASSSU organised regular seminars and discussions aimed at students in the Humanities and Social studies. Well-known Bulgarian lecturers were involved in the seminars. The two biggest events were dedicated to the themes of '*Antiutopia*' and '*Balkan Identity vs. Local Identities*', the latter resulting in an article on the topic in the Bulgarian "*Obektiv*" magazine.

### **Yearbook**

The Sociology Students Yearbook contains the best student essays written for all of the taught and research courses in the Department of Sociology, of the Sofia University. At the beginning of the year 2007 ASSSU released the second book of the yearbook – Year 2005/2006. At the end of the same year the third book was printed – Year 2006/2007. The Yearbook is also published electronically and can be downloaded free on our website. It is currently the only edition of this kind available at all Bulgarian sociology departments, which makes it a unique and useful reference to sociology students all over the country.

## **Participation in external events**

In the year 2007 ASSSU took part in a conference on the problems of higher education, organized by the South-West University in Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria. Members of ASSSU made presentations on the topic.

In the summer of 2007 ASSSU participated in the Youth Organisations' Exhibition which was held in Varna. At the exhibition our organization had the opportunity to present itself as an actor on the Bulgarian youth NGO field and establish links with other youth organisations.

Since the beginning of 2007 ASSSU members have been involved in the departmental commission responsible for the "New Curriculum Plan". This is a group of staff and students within the Department of Sociology that is working towards improving the quality of education at our University. We hold our participation in the commission as very important not only for the university as an institution but, most importantly, for its students.

As a joint member of the Bulgarian Sociological Association, ASSSU took part in the 2007 BSA Annual Assembly. Since the main theme on the agenda was sociological education in Bulgaria, ASSSU's role on the Assembly '07 was extremely important.

## **Networking**

In 2007 ASSSU established very important partnerships with other organisations and universities and significantly expanded its network and contacts. Our most significant partners this year have been the South-west University (SWU) in Blagoevgrad, the University of National and World Economy in Sofia (UNWE-Sofia), and the youth NGO "Zaedno" which has also hosted our new website.