

Contact email April 2012

Greetings everyone,

This month my thoughts have taken me overseas. It got through to me that we are not alone. There are 82 sociological associations and in the main they assist in the interchange of sociology theory and practice among university staff.

It occurred to me that if we could locate any sections of other sociological associations that share our concern for sociologists outside academia and develop an international link where we might share information and ideas and perhaps help encourage the employment of sociologist in new organisations it could be beneficial to all of us.

However, having looked at the list of sociological associations there seems to be few who have a particular section for Sociologists, working outside of a University. In fact I could find only three. Ourselves, the British Sociological Association and probably one in the American Sociological Association. I contacted the convenor of the British Association and got an encouraging response and the news that there was another group in France and she would forward details. I have since written to the American, Canadian, South African and New Zealand Associations to see what their response might be. I now have two replies one from Canada which reads:

"Dr. Scott: thanks for the note. No, we don't have a sector that focuses on this. However, as of next year, we will have some sort of organization to help these individuals. I say this because this year we are announcing an award for "sociology practitioners" to be given each year as well as a scholarship for a student involved in applied research. So, we are working in that direction. Keep us in mind as you go forward. JIM"

And one from New Zealand:

While we don't have a specific section, I am aware that some (though not many) of our members are not in academia. I am happy to distribute your inquiry to our general membership, with a note to contact you if they fall into the relevant category. Would that be suitable? If not, feel free to suggest an alternative. Best wishes, Maxine

That is three encouraging responses so I will let you know how things develop in due course.

Whilst exploring in the international domain I came across the Russian ideas of what constitutes sociological organisation; you may find it interesting:

The Union of Sociologists of Russia is intended to unite all those who respect the history of national sociology, critically perceive and recognize its legacy and are ready to bear joint responsibility for the authority of sociological knowledge and the perception of a sociologist as a professional, responsible, and moral personality.

The goal of the Union is the development of sociological science, education and practice on the basis of consolidating Russian sociologists in the interests of scientifically and practically contributing to the social and economical progress of the civil society and the strengthening of the welfare state ensuring the harmonious development of the people actively participating in labour activity and public life. The Union is intended to unite sociologists of Russia and sees its major task in creating conditions for resolving contradictions accumulated within sociology, increasing quality of fundamental and applied research, sociological education and enlightenment.

Congresses of the Union of Sociologists of Russia are held annually in Moscow with the traditional participation of internationally known scientists, professors, representatives of governmental and legislative bodies, public organizations, business, and foreign guests.

Alan Scott

Convenor