

Anthropological Studies of Physical Development of Students at the Faculty of Biology at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

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The purpose of this study is to characterize anthropometrically physical development of Bulgarian students at the beginning of the XXI century, by comparison with the results of previous studies of students in Sofia. An anthropometric survey of 77 students, 18 to 25 years old, 31 males and 46 females, was conducted in 2016-2017. The results have been compared with data from investigations at 1986 and at 2002. The comparison shows stagnation of the secular changes in height, which should be attributed to the long-term negative impact on the growth and development of the students during the difficult years of their early childhood. Secular weight changes are positive, thus BMI increases sharply as well. This indicates that weight and BMI respond in a shorter time to changes in living conditions than height. Most physical development traits show the similar dynamics as weight and BMI. The observed secular changes are probably due to the large socio-economic changes during the period under review (1986-2017).

Key words: physical development, university students, height, young adults, secular changes.