

## Annual Report 2011, Berlin

This year's conference in Berlin of the network Research in Innovative Intercultural Learning Environments Network in the European Education Research was organized as paper sessions and network meetings. The Network promotes innovative strategies dealing with intercultural teaching and its learning environment. Key issues are cultural identity and diversity, multi-ethnic learning groups and communities, intercultural discourses and the role of intercultural education in promoting both the local identities of groups and a sense of common citizenship in Europe. The Network established itself this year for 3 symposia, 2 workshops, 11 paper sessions. A total of 42 presentations were organized. This year the network continued the idea of a 'Session Zero' which aimed to offer a window into both the network and those who worked within it for the week. This year there was a discussion of the network title and descriptors. The Zero presentation was done by John Willumsen on behalf of Tony Cotton and Helen Toft, who unfortunately were not able to attend this year's conference. The group of contributors who engaged in this session suggested that this event seemed to create a sense of comradeship and shared endeavour which encouraged us all to make connections within and between each others papers and presentations. It also supported us all in feeling welcomed to the network and eased the nerves a little as we realised we were amongst friends for our own presentations.

The range and quality of the presentations of the network was by many viewed to be quite excellent and the diversity of perspectives offered throughout the sessions brought a sense of inter-disciplinarity to the network which was quite convincing. It was also encouraging that the discussions after the papers were not dominated by one or two voices but seemed to offer space for anyone who wanted to offer a contribution to do so in a supportive environment.

The thematic focus of the sessions Intercultural Education and Issues of Inclusion; The Experience of International Students; Teaching, Learning and Diversity; The Experience of Newly Arrived Communities; A Music and Arts Education Research; Identity and Autobiography; Diversity and Urban Education; Literacies and Cultural Diversity; Issues of Inclusion in the Mathematics Classroom; Bilingualism and Second Language Learning; Cultural Diversity and Higher Education; Relations, Diversity and Empowerment; An Uneven Play: Theatre in Intercultural Education; Cities, Citizenship and Civic Learning. Most of the papers reflected the theme of the conference, "Urban Education" as well as the perspective of the network: To create new ways of working and new combinations of ideas and practices in intercultural education. Some of the sessions were drawing upon the projects and the way of working developed within earlier international seminars of the network. Maria Angels Subirats, Raimonda Bruniviciute, Manfred Bayer and John Willumsen were chairing the sessions (and Manfred Bayer, Gert Biesta/Gillian Powel, Elisabete Maria Xavier Gomes, the Symposia) which were all initiating interesting discussions and also gave a variety of researchers a chance to present a lot of new ideas and approaches. The number of people attending was varying but most sessions were very well attended. The Evaluation session and business meeting was attended by a few in the changed format which was organized into something similar to the Zero Session this year. The sub themes are to be the same for the next conference in Cadiz: Intercultural education and issues of Inclusion; Innovative Research Methodology; Cross Cultural Research and Intercultural learning; Intercultural Education and learning environment in Higher Education; Innovative Arts Based Educational Enquiry. The website was launched and will be developed with facilities such as exchange forums for papers, presentations and links as well as a discussions board. The conveners of this network are: John Willumsen (Link convenor), Tony Cotton, Manfred Bayer, Maria-Angels Subirats de Bayego and Raimonda Bruneviciute.