Institutes of Technology Languages Strategy Network Participants to date: AIT, ITB, Cork IT, DkIT, GMIT, LyIT, LIT, IT Sligo, ITTD, ITT, WIT, DIT. For further information contact: Dr. Riana Walsh, ITT Dublin riana.walsh@ittdublin.ie Tel: 01 4042831 Ms.Kristin Brogan, IT Tralee Kristin.brogan@staff.ittralee.ie Tel: 066 7191902	**Network Activities & Workshops** **May 2006** IT Tallaght Dublin. **Action Research Groups** established to research topics relevant to Language Policy & Planning e.g. TEFL/EFL/ESL; Language Awareness; Intercultural Competence; Learning Styles; Transferable Skills; ELP; CEF; Report Research (National and International); European Commission websites; CLIL ; Life Long Learning / Open & Distance Learning; Work Placement/ & Study Abroad programmes. **October 2006** Athlone IT. Action Research Groups presented their findings to support the design of internal Language Policies and new syllabi within the language study area. Presentation on Language Policy & Planning by Dr. Muiris O'Laoire (ITT and member of Language Policy Expert Group 2006). **December 2006** Carlow IT. Presentation to the meeting of Heads of School of Business & Humanities of the IoTs. Outcomes of a LP&P Questionnaire issued to Network participants eliciting information on modularisation, its impact on language learning/ teaching and new emerging opportunities. **February 2007** ITT Dublin. Prof. Angela Chambers (UL) addressed the Network with an international perspective on Language Policy & Planning. Action Research Groups presentations and a workshop on formulating an internal Language Policy.	**May 2007** Dundalk IT. Expert Panel of speakers from Fáilte Ireland, IDA, RIA, Council of Directors, representing both language and non-language related interests presented their views and perspectives on **" *The future of languages in the IoTs***". **October 2007** IT Blanchardstown, guest speakers from IBEC, Forfás, DES, HEA, Enterprise Ireland addressed the Network on **"*Further perspectives on the future of languages in the IoTs*"** . **May 2008** Letterkenny IT. Best Practice models in Language Policy and Planning. Network renamed to IoTs Languages Strategy Network. **October 2008** Moodle and e-learning training at IT Tallaght Dublin. Presentation of Questionnaire results: *Snapshot of Languages in the IoTs 07/08*. **May 2009** Waterford IT. Examples of 'Best Practice' in FLL & Teaching. Presentation of EU Projects which Network participants are engaged in. Workgroup discussions on designing a generic language brochure & website to promote language learning in Ireland. **October 2009** DIT. Presentation of Questionnaire results: *Snapshot of Languages in the IoTs 08/09*. Presentation by Mary Ruane, Language Centre UCD on the Common European Framework. Workgroups generate materials for the promotional brochure & website.

Podcasts, video and updates relating to Network events can be located on the NDLR Modern Languages Community of Practice website and archives:
http://www.ndlr.ie/modlang/blog/

Background

In February 2006 the Royal Irish Academy *"Language Policy and Language Planning Conference"* was held in Dublin Castle. As a result of debate at this conference, the idea of a Language Policy Workshop for the Institutes of Technology (IoT) sector was generated. Given the decline in student uptake of Modern Languages within the IoTs, this topic presented a viable opportunity for inter-institutional collaboration amongst IoT language lecturers and other stakeholders in the area of Language Policy and Planning.

What is the IoT Languages Strategy Network?

This is an initiative by IoT language lecturers and builds on existing language expertise within the IoT sector. Our initial focus is to create awareness of Good Practice and to promote language learning by designing and adopting internal Language Policies within the various IoTs. Inter-institutional collaboration is encouraged in order to support and facilitate the formulating of such policies and to thereby create opportunity for innovation within both the teaching and learning of languages.
This Network is a unique forum providing IoT language lecturers with a new opportunity to exchange ideas and acquire new learning on language policy and planning, teaching and learning, current research, good practice models.

The Network has been in existence since May 2006 and organises two annual events.

Initially entitled the IoTs Languages Policy & Planning Network we renamed in 2008 to the IoTs Languages Strategy Network to reflect the evolving focus of our activities.

Aims of the Network

The aim of the **IoT Languages Strategy Network** is to adopt a pro-active approach to language learning and teaching and to foster greater inter-institutional collaboration for languages within the IoT sector to the benefit all participants. Some IoTs already have Language Policies in place, while other colleges are currently discussing the possibilities or formulating a policy. This is therefore an excellent time to work together as IoT language lecturers in order to further research in the area of Language Policy & Planning, with a view to exploring aspects of existing Good Practice and examining the extent to which a college Language Policy can be a successful tool in the promotion of languages and other skills relating to the learning of languages.

Relevance of the Network
The relevance and success of this Network is dependent on creating new dialogue and adopting a pro-active, collaborative and inclusive approach involving all stakeholders, both language and non-language specialists, practitioners and management from all domains. Network participants are cognisant of the necessity to involve all stakeholders and to refer also to the expertise of non-linguists in order to widen the discussion and generate motivation for initiatives within languages in the IoT sector.

It is a very opportune time to further develop the impetus created by the Network as there is a general consensus amongst language lecturers that we can be participants in bringing about positive change and that college language policies are a valid instrument in this process. Network participants adopt a cohesive and pro-active approach to addressing the various problems and opportunities and to actively promote the learning of languages, and transferable skills related to language learning, within the IoT sector. The emerging linguistic and cultural diversity so evident within the educational context today can be planned for strategically within a relevant IoT Language Policy.