

## **Research project: provision of programmes in EAL in undergraduate teacher education courses in Ireland**

This research project, which is currently taking place, received funding from SCoTENS (Standing Conference on Teacher Education North & South) in the 2008 call for applications. The project is being led by Barbara O'Toole, Seán Bracken and Anne Ryan from Coláiste Mhuire, in partnership with Frank Quinn and Martin Hagan from St Mary's University College, Belfast.

Teacher education institutions have the task of preparing beginning teachers for classrooms which are increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse. The main focus of the project is to carry out a comparative study of the provision for EAL in undergraduate courses in Ireland, north and south.

The significant actions associated with the Project include: a literature review of the field; a comparison of the educational contexts in each jurisdiction; a review of the official policy context; an identification of the opportunities available for professional development for teachers in schools; a determination as to how EAL is structured into courses at the initial teacher education (ITE) phase, in these two colleges; a survey of attitudes to EAL and views on personal competence among BEd students in the final year of their ITE programme in both institutions; and a seminar to disseminate findings of the Project.