

**AEHT Workshop on
“Hospitality Management”
held in Athlone:
Good results - and Irish
Hospitality at its best!**

17 participants from 10 European countries experienced an unforgettable working session at Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) from April 6th to 9th 2011: excellent speakers, topical themes, useful exchange of good practices, congenial team work - and an overwhelming personal attention - “pampering” even - by our colleagues at the AIT.



Official Seminar picture:
Mr Tim Fenn, CEO Irish Hotels Federation surrounded by the seminar participants; on the left is seminar organizer John Carey (with AEHT folder)

President prof. Ciarán Ó Catháin (AEHT president from 1994 – 97) welcomed the guests warmly on behalf of his 5000 students and teachers; together with the head of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, John O’Hara, who provided a truly pleasing atmosphere in the rooms of his department, and colleague John Carey, a senior teacher of hospitality management himself, demonstrated perfectly how to combine theoretical knowledge with practical skills by organizing this event.



Visiting the food production facilities of AIT college

Adolf Steindl, member of the AEHT Council of Elders and consultant in tourism, education and youth, gave an introduction to the terminology of hospitality training in English – and presented recent KPIs (key performance indicators) of Austrian and European hotels; colleagues from Bellinzona (Switzerland), Szeget (Hungary), Savonia (Finland), Riga (Latvia), Dublin (Ireland), Bled (Slovenia) and Bad Leonfelden (Austria) told their successful “teaching stories” in hospitality management.

John Carey informed the colleagues about innovations in the hospitality management competition in The Hague in November 2011. A guided tour through the immense campus of the college and a superb dinner at the department’s training restaurant nicely rounded off the first working day.



Nuala Harding, Learning and Teaching Coordinator at the AIT

Tim Fenn, CEO of the IHF - Irish Hotels Federation

Day number two provided us with interesting insights into new pedagogical possibilities for us teachers: Colleague Nuala Harding, Learning and Teaching Co-ordinator at the AIT, explained the Irish Educational system - with focus on hospitality training - and gave a practical example of “peer learning”: two of her students advised us (the seminar participants assuming the role of fellow students) how to very effectively study at AIT. And the whole afternoon was most efficiently and vividly used by colleague Brian Toolan, senior lecturer in management strategy at AIT, to get us ‘mature students’ acquainted with his case study ‘The Town House Hotel’; there the emphasis lay, however, mainly on his brilliant methodological approach: How to enthuse students for a (normally somewhat) ‘dry’ theoretical issue...



Participants gather for the reception in the AIT Board Room

These perfect pedagogical demonstrations were complemented by the hospitality management highlight of this day: the paper by Mr Tim Fenn, CEO of the Irish Hotels Federation (IHF); Mr Fenn gave us very informative inside views of the Irish Hotels, which are currently in a truly difficult situation: world economic recession, banking crisis, a somewhat too intensive expansion of the Irish economy during recent years etc. But the IHF is very actively tackling the present problems with a convincing strategy – and we were all united in wishing Ireland the best of success in every respect.



From right to left: John Carey (chief organizer), John O'Hara Head of Hospitality, Tourism & Leisure, President Ciaran O'Cathain, Marian Fitzgibbon Head of Humanities, Paul Murphy Education Officer at Fáilte Ireland, Adolf Steindl member of the Council of Elders.

A short but very enjoyable evening cruise on Ireland's main river took us to the renowned Wineport Lodge for another excellent meal – right on the banks of the Shannon, a very agreeable location for 'final discussions' between the workshop participants and the occasion to cordially thank our Irish friends at the Athlone Institute of Technology for these memorable days in the heart of Ireland.

All documents relating to this workshop have been uploaded onto the AEHT website (<http://www.aeht.eu/higher-education/>) - thus they are accessible for all AEHT members.

Text: A. Steindl.

Pictures: Adolf Steindl and the organisers of the seminar