

Carmela Palumbo,

Italian Ministry of Education, *Opening of the conference, the learning of Mathematics and Science in the new curricula*

Carmela Palumbo explains the reasons why the Italian Ministry of Education has promoted and supported both the Italian projects on Science and Mathematics and the international SMART project. It has been a convinced promotion and support due to the importance of the scientific subjects and the necessity to widespread and compare the strategies, methodologies and results with qualitative partners like Sweden, Germany, Hungary and the Netherlands. The confrontation with the other European partners is useful and worthwhile in order to test the materials and activities produced within the Italian projects. Moreover, facing the teaching of the scientific subjects in a structured way is a very important issue nowadays.

Innovation in the didactic methodologies is intertwined with innovation in the contents: the European Ministries of Education are currently discussing a *New Skills Agenda for Europe 2020* which combines citizenship, cross-curricular and disciplinary competences; the focus here is on high competences like creativity, self-entrepreneurship, team-work skills. The aim is to improve excellence but also to cure the common knowledge of all students.

The collaboration with the institutions of the countries included in the SMART Project will hopefully be prosecuted after the end of the project life.