

# Chemical Laboratory Safety Training Scheme (CHLASTS)

As reported briefly in the December 2003 issue of the ICASE Journal (Vol.14, No 4, p. 49), the third meeting of the Leonardo Project Steering Committee for the CHLASTS Project was held in the University of Bremen, German, during the period 5-9 November 2003. All the partner universities were present (see ICASE Journal Vol.14, No 3, p. 47) as well as the umbrella organisation for schools and science teachers' associations (ICASE).

Progress was made on the development of the four proposed modules – *Safety Legislation for Decision Makers*, *Safety Procedures in Laboratories*, *Laboratory Safety in Schools*, and *Awareness of Safety Issues in Society* – as well as on the *Multilingual Glossary* and the set of *Symbols for Safety*. The module of greatest relevance to ICASE is *Laboratory Safety in Schools*. The working group responsible for this module has prepared a questionnaire for schools to ascertain current practices in a sample of schools in various European countries. Current practices include facilities for waste management, for fume cupboards, general regulations for safe conduct in laboratories, and for procedures following chemical accidents. The group is also considering lists of school experiments commonly carried out in school laboratories and a list of substances commonly used. One such list, compiled internationally, originally under the auspices of UNESCO, is now available on a website in the University of Queensland, Australia, prepared by Dr John Elfick, a former science education specialist for UNESCO ([www.uq.edu.au](http://www.uq.edu.au)). This list also contains a whole chapter on safety in school laboratories.

A European meeting of ICASE member associations was held at the beginning of December 2003 in Prague. Representatives of associations from Belgium, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, the Netherlands, Poland (2), Spain, and Sweden were present with the European representative (Miia Ranikmae) as the coordinator. The meeting was concerned, in part, with the proposed evaluation of the CHLASTS Project with special relevance to those aspects dealing with safety in school laboratories. This part of the evaluation process is a direct responsibility of ICASE. A schedule and timetable for this evaluation was agreed.

The next meeting of the Leonardo Project Steering Committee will be held in Cyprus from April 14-18, 2004. Nicos Valanides, Department of Education, University of Cyprus, will organize the meeting.