

### Positive reception

Greece can be considered one of the prisme<sup>2</sup> success stories, partly as a result of timing as the project dovetailed with a major effort on the part of the national association, HACI, to relaunch and revive Responsible Care with their mainly SME membership. HACI says the series of three workshops was very positively received by participants, who praised the quality of presentations and availability of electronic materials provided for the events.

Apostolides Apostolos, mechanical engineer at Hatziloucas A.E., Greece, commented: "The workshop I have attended was excellent and the tools very useful... All materials will be used... for the improvement of Responsible Care in our company."

### Flexibility in time of recession

Flexibility turned out to be an essential ingredient of prisme<sup>2</sup> whose launch coincided with the global recession, which started at the end of 2008 and forced companies and associations to re-evaluate their business activities.

SMEs – some struggling for survival – were questioning the value of engagement in the project; and also large chemical companies – planned to serve as 'mentors' – turned their focus inwards. In response, the prisme<sup>2</sup> working group extended the initiation phase and launched a partner campaign to involve a broader scope of organizations with expertise.

The Slovak (ZCHFP) and Czech (SCHP) industry associations joined forces for the prisme<sup>2</sup> pilot backed up by Duslo A.S., PENTA and Unipetrol, and additional expert support from Cefic, the solvents sector group ESIG and the European Agency for Health and Safety at Work, EU-OSHA. A wide range of topics including regulation – particularly REACH issues – were presented in this pilot, which attracted a broader audience than just smaller chemical companies.

Reporting back on the third prisme<sup>2</sup> workshop, Silvia Surova, head of Responsible Care with ZCHFP, commented that it "was well received by the nearly 50 participants representing Slovak SMEs, but also larger companies, the Slovak Ministry of Economy, the Slovak Environmental Agency as well as the Slovak trade unions."

### Strong partnerships

In Germany, the workshop programme began relatively slowly, but national coordinator Hans Daniel, Responsible Care manager at VCI, notes that more active and targeted promotion encouraged much better attendance for the follow-up event. "Our second pilot workshop was organised in cooperation with VCI Baden-Württemberg with around 42 participants, mostly operations managers." Held on site at Rhein Chemie Rheinau GmbH, the workshop involved a guided tour through the production plant while coverage of topics such as energy management for SMEs, active environment protection and risk management "resulted in some lively discussion", said Daniel.

The prisme<sup>2</sup> project has a strong platform to build on in Germany thanks to existing partnerships with trade unions and the employers group, and the VCI's committee of SME businesses. Daniel notes that workshop participants stressed the need "to reach out to younger managers in the chemical industry who have not experienced the times of the Seveso and Bhopal disasters which created Responsible Care," adding that one of their conclusions was that Responsible Care "should be better integrated in the training of professionals."

## Product of prisme<sup>2</sup>

One of the first concrete results of prisme<sup>2</sup> is a toolkit, launched by Cefic in June 2010. The toolkit brings together a number of validated tools in the following categories:

- Chemicals safety (regulations)
- Chemicals safety (voluntary measures)
- Corporate social responsibility
- Energy efficiency
- Environmental management
- Integrated management Responsible Care
- Occupational health & safety
- Plant & process safety
- Supply chain management
- Transport safety

The instruments have been developed by various organisations within, as well as outside, the chemical industry. The toolbox will be regularly revised and extended to keep it relevant and useful to users.

