

# Press Release

Brussels, 04 April 2019

**Connect – Listen – Learn – Collaborate**

## EPCA and PlasticsEurope kicked off a 4<sup>th</sup> edition of EYDC

After three successful editions that took place between 2016 and 2018, the European Youth Debating Competition ([EYDC, www.eydc.eu](http://www.eydc.eu)), started this year in Spain, with a National Final that took place on 26<sup>th</sup> March in Tarragona. The European Petrochemical Association (EPCA) and PlasticsEurope team up once again to organise this European Youth Debating Competition for youngsters in Europe, between March and September 2019. This year, the topic of the debate is **“Rethink, Reuse, Recycle: how would you shape a sustainable future with plastics and petrochemicals?”**



*Winners of the Spanish National Final together with Javier Constanter, PlasticsEurope President*

Seven National Finals will be organised in: Belgium or the Netherlands for a joint “Benelux” Final, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom. Students between 16 and 19 years old from across Europe will have the opportunity to join the competition. Consequently, 25 winners from the National Finals will be representing their countries at the European Finals 2019. These will take place on Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019 during the 53<sup>rd</sup> EPCA Annual Meeting in Berlin. The top 5 out of 10 winners will be awarded during the Closing Lunch on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

In the end, the jury of the Spanish National Final selected six winners: Tomás Pérez Stoppa, Clara Fernández Mas, Juliette Bonifacio Martins, Cèlia Puig Aiguadé, Quim Mas Paradis, Nadia Zougagh. Following the Spanish competition, the German National Final will be taking place on 4<sup>th</sup> May in Frankfurt.

The EYDC is a multifaceted educational initiative designed to provide young people with a unique opportunity to acquire new skills by expressing themselves and interacting in a convincing way about societal topics; and for our industry to connect with the new generation, listen and learn about their views. EPCA and PlasticsEurope also aim to make science and technology more tangible, accessible, and directly connected to the everyday reality of the debaters. Beyond the importance of STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), the youngsters will also gain soft skills that will help them interact in a fast-changing and sometimes divisive environment. The competition is open to anyone irrespective of their origin, gender, age and culture.

There are both challenges and opportunities to be considered in the transition towards a circular economy. Insufficient waste management infrastructure and funding on the one hand, and developing innovative technologies with the aim of transforming waste into new resources as a key step to a circular economy business model; education and innovative solutions to build a sustainable future on the other hand.

Caroline Ciuciu, CEO of EPCA, said:

“We are delighted to support for the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row this initiative which fosters an inclusive dialogue, facilitates the sharing of perspectives and inspires collaborative reflection on a topic which is crucial to our common future.”

Karl-H. Foerster, Executive Director of PlasticsEurope stated:

“Innovative thinking, creativity, thirst for knowledge and courage are crucial to change our world for the better. We are happy to play a role in this direction.”

For the participants of the EYDC, in-depth research and preparation, high standards of debating skills and techniques and the ability to interact with each other are all necessary aspects taken into account during these debates. In the end, EPCA and PlasticsEurope are looking forward to thought-provoking discussions and inspirational viewpoints from this year's EYDC.

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### **The European Petrochemical Association (EPCA)**

*Based in Brussels, EPCA is the **primary European Business Network** for the global petrochemical business community consisting of chemical producers, their suppliers, customers and service providers. It operates for and through more than 700-member companies from 54 different countries. EPCA **hosts events** in Europe offering members all over the world the opportunity to meet industry leaders and selected external stakeholders and stay abreast of international market developments as well as technological and societal trends. EPCA also **assists** members on **specific topics** that underpin the sustainable development of the global petrochemical industry. EPCA promotes STEM education, with a clear focus on gender and diversity inclusion. EPCA also highlight the multidisciplinary approach and the variety of challenging career paths that the petrochemical industry offers.*

***PlasticsEurope** is one of the leading European trade associations with centres in Brussels, Frankfurt, London, Madrid, Milan and Paris. The association is networking with European and national plastics associations and has more than 100 member companies, producing over 90% of all polymers across the EU28 member states plus Norway, Switzerland and Turkey.*