

## Press Release

Milan, 30 May 2019

**"Rethink, Reuse, Recycle: how would you shape a sustainable future with plastics and petrochemicals?"**

**This is the topic discussed by over 80 young people under 19, coming from 10 schools in Lombardy**

Today, the Italian National Finals of the "European Youth Debating Competition" (EYDC, [www.eydc.eu](http://www.eydc.eu)) took place in Milan, gathering 80 young debaters from 10 schools across Lombardy. The fourth edition of this pan-European educational initiative will involve more than 500 second-grade secondary school students from the Benelux, Germany, France, Italy, Poland, Spain, the UK and is organised by the European Petrochemical Association (EPCA) and PlasticsEurope. The two-hour debate in Milan was preceded by a professional debate training, which included learning about presentation skills, organised by young leaders GmbH. The debate itself followed strict debate rules throughout the whole competition, in all participating countries.

Yuri Coppi, Director of the Scholastic Office Territorial Region of Milan and Metropolitan City, welcomed the young debaters. This initiative allows them not only to stand up for their ideas, but also to have a glimpse of what makes a scientific research path appealing to them. "This is a great opportunity to think about the choices for their future.", added Coppi.

Karl-H. Foerster, Executive Director of PlasticsEurope, praised the debaters by stating: "Today's youth help us change the world for the better; we must and are here to listen to them."

Roberto Frassine, Professor at the Polytechnic University kicked-off the debate with a short statement in favour of petrochemicals and plastics, while Giorgio Zampetti, Director of Legambiente highlighted some issues related to the misuse of plastic products.

The jury, made up of representatives of industry, academia and experts from EPCA and PlasticsEurope, closely followed the debate and assessed the performance of the debaters. Evaluation criteria were based not only on their preparation, but also on their ability to express themselves and interact with all participants.

The winners were:

1. Alice Soldati – Liceo Scientifico Vittorini, Milano
2. Manuela Abdel Sayed – Liceo Scientifico Vittorini, Milano
3. Elia Giannini – Istituto Tecnico Molinari, Milano
4. Valerio Venezia – Istituto Tecnico Cannizzaro, Rho
5. Stefan Eugeniev Apostolov – Istituto Tecnico Maggiolini, Parabiago
6. Nihad Fadene – Liceo Scientifico Bramante, Magenta

They will participate in the European Finals, in Berlin on 7<sup>th</sup> October, together with the finalists from all other countries, in the context of the 53<sup>rd</sup> EPCA Annual Meeting.

Nathalie Debuyst, Communication and Education Manager at EPCA underlined the importance of this project, which contributes to developing a dialogue between young people throughout Europe. The initiative offers the opportunity to make science and technology more accessible to the

youngsters' reality and empower them with soft skills that will help them in their future careers, irrespective of their role or path.

"This splendid initiative continues to confirm the desire of our young people to get ready for a better future.", declared Daniele Petrini, CEO of SABIC Italia. "As in previous editions, the debate form is the one that more than any other demonstrates their potential. My thanks go to the teachers who supported their students today in the necessary preparation. It is always a pleasure for me to be invited as an Honorary President of this initiative", he continued.

### *Background*

EPCA and PlasticsEurope have promoted the European Youth Debating Competition for the fourth consecutive year to involve young Europeans in the key issues facing society and approach them about the study of scientific disciplines (STEM). The Italian National Finals of the debate, for the third consecutive year, was carried out in collaboration with the Regional Scholastic Office for Lombardy - Milan Territorial Area and Metropolitan City.

Further information about the EYDC is available at:  
[www.eydc.eu](http://www.eydc.eu), [www.epca.eu](http://www.epca.eu), [www.plasticseurope.org](http://www.plasticseurope.org) and on Twitter: #youthdebate2019

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## **Partners**

### ***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.