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EPCA and PlasticsEurope join forces to promote STEM education New debating competition for European youngsters launched

The European Petrochemical Association (EPCA) and PlasticsEurope have joined forces to promote STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) in Europe. They have launched a new series of European Youth Debating Competitions (www.eydc.eu) throughout nine European countries, with a grand finale to be held in Budapest in early October 2016, at the 50th EPCA Annual Meeting.

The organisers aim at promoting sciences and sustainability – two key ingredients for the future of both industry sectors and the overall competitiveness of the European Union.

Already between 2007 and 2012, a series of debating competitions for young students had been very successfully organized by the plastics manufacturers in 20 cities throughout Europe. This time, young students aged 16 to 19 will get the chance to debate on chemistry related issues around the overarching theme “50 years of chemical industry. What’s next?” The debates will all follow the same standardized formula at national and European level. The national competitions will be held in Belgium, Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

“We want to open up a constructive dialogue with the decision makers of tomorrow“, explains Cathy Demeestere, CEO of EPCA, “showing the openness of the chemical business community whilst promoting the chemical industry as a good industry to work for. STEM education is an excellent starting point for challenging careers for girls and boys all over the globe“. Karl-H Foerster, Executive Director of PlasticsEurope, adds: “We believe it is crucial to make people aware of the large sustainability potential of chemistry and plastics“.

The European Petrochemical Association (EPCA)

Based in Brussels, EPCA is the quality network in Europe for the global chemical 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 provides a platform to meet, exchange information and transfer learning, and serves as a think tank for its members and stakeholders. EPCA promotes STEM education, with a clear focus on gender and diversity inclusion. EPCA also underscores that the chemical industry is a good industry to work for.

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.