

Press Release

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Press Contacts

PlasticsEurope AISBL

Nuria Buezas

Communications and Media Manager

Phone: +32 (2) 675 1757

nuria.buezas@plasticseurope.org

EPCA

Nathalie Debuyst

Communication and Education Manager

Phone: +32 (0)2 741 86 66

nathalie.debuyst@epca.eu

40 British Students debate on the role of sciences and sustainability

Winners selected at UK National Final of 2016

European Youth Debating Competition – heading to European Final in Budapest

At the UK edition of the 2016 European Youth Debating Competition, an initiative organised by the European Petrochemical Association (EPCA) and PlasticsEurope, 40 youngsters from all over the UK discussed the overarching theme "50 years of chemical industry. What's next?". Three young debaters were selected to represent the UK at the Grand Finale to be held in Budapest from 1-4 October, during the 50th EPCA Anniversary Annual Meeting.

Supported by the British Plastics Federation (BPF), 40 students from different schools and universities took part in the debate, which was organised in the heart of London at the Royal Society of Chemistry's Burlington House, in Piccadilly.

"This competition is a unique opportunity for students to express themselves in a convincing way and for our industries to connect, listen and learn about their views" stated Cathy Demeestere, CEO of EPCA. "Learning from a youth debate on this topic contributes to our reflection on the future development of our industry in helping the growing global population having access to sustainable agriculture and clean water supplies whilst making sure valuable

Editors' note

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 53 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. We are networking with European and national plastics associations and have more than 100 member companies, producing over 90% of all polymers across the EU28 member states plus Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. The European plastics industry makes a significant contribution to the welfare in Europe by enabling innovation, creating quality of life to citizens and facilitating resource efficiency and climate protection. More than 1.45 million people are working in more than 60,000 companies (mainly small and medium sized companies in the converting sector) to create a turnover around 320 bn EUR per year. The plastics industry includes polymer producers - represented by PlasticsEurope, converters - represented by EuPC - and machine manufacturers - represented by EUROMAP.

For further info see the web links: www.plasticseurope.org, www.plasticsconverters.eu, www.euromap.org.

resources are not wasted but used in a way that future generations can continue to benefit from them.”

Kim Christiansen, Director, North Region, PlasticsEurope, praised the students’ debating skills, stating that “With the challenges the world is facing today, it is important that we are all aware of the large sustainability potential of plastics and chemistry. This was a unique opportunity to engage in a dialogue with the leaders of tomorrow. I was profoundly impressed and inspired by the overall level of maturity and debating skills the young debaters presented today”.

The jury, composed of industry, academia and media representatives, faced a difficult challenge in choosing the three winners. The three best speakers were Caroline Gakpetor (aged 17) from St Benedict’s School Ealing, Noah Slinn (aged 17) from Princethorpe College Rugby and Mac-Fall Ambrose (aged 17) also from St Benedict’s School Ealing.

They will now join the selected winners from the other National European Youth Debating Competitions, for the final in Budapest in October. The three remaining debates in this cycle will be organised and held in Belgium, France and the Netherlands, following the summer break.

Editor’s Note:

The main objectives of the European Youth Debating Competition and its organisers from the petrochemical and plastics industry are to promote STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) as well as to inform about sustainability and resource efficiency, all of them being key ingredients for the future of both industry sectors and the overall competitiveness of the European Union. To reach this, EPCA and PlasticsEurope have launched this new series of the European Youth Debating Competition (www.eydc.eu) targeting young students aged 16 to 19, throughout nine EU countries.

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