

Media Release

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EPCA and PlasticsEurope launch a 3rd edition of the EYDC

Europe's youngsters to debate on Smart Cities of the future and the role of Plastics and Petrochemicals

Based on the extremely successful 2016 and 2017 editions of the European Youth Debating Competition ([EYDC, www.eydc.eu](http://www.eydc.eu)), EYDC is now back for 2018. EPCA (the European Petrochemical Association) and PlasticsEurope once again partner up to organize a series of debating competitions for youngsters in Europe, taking place between April and October 2018.

This time, nine countries will be hosting the National Finals: Belgium or the Netherlands for a joint "Benelux" Finals, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom. Per country, some 50 students between 16 and 19 years old will have the chance to participate. Consequently, during the European Finals 2018, scheduled to take place in Vienna on Monday 8th October 2018, some 30 previously selected winners from the National Finals will be representing their countries. The EU Finals are embedded into the EPCA 52nd Annual Meeting that will be held from 7th to 10th October 2018.

The EYDC is a multifaceted educational initiative designed to give young people a unique opportunity to acquire new skills by expressing themselves and interacting in a convincing way about industry linked 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. The competition is open to anyone irrespective of their origin, gender, age & culture. This year's debate touches upon the topic: ***"Living, learning, working and moving in Smart Cities of the future: with or without plastics and petrochemicals"***.

How will we live tomorrow in the Cities of the future or "Smart Cities" engaged in a sustainable transition process? Will mobility in smart cities of the future be completely interconnected? Will drones be delivering our goods? Will current workplaces and educational environments still exist? What will the contribution of plastics and petrochemicals be to our houses, cars and the environment?

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 consideration during these debates. In the end, EPCA and PlasticsEurope expect again more fascinating viewpoints and outcomes from this year's EYDC!

Caroline Ciuciu, CEO of EPCA, expresses: "Beyond the importance of STEM education, we are convinced that empowering students with soft skills will certainly help them to interact in a fast-changing and sometimes divisive environment."

Karl-H. Foerster, Executive Director of PlasticsEurope adds: "From the 2016 and 2017 editions of the EYDC, we have learned that the youngsters expressed mature arguments, demonstrating an insightful comprehension of the synergy and collective responsibility between industry, consumers and the society at large".

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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 provides a member oriented **platform** to connect and meet your peers and potential partners, exchange ideas and showcase your successes. EPCA is also a **forum** to develop and share knowledge and support innovation, forward thinking and sustainability. 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.*