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RadiciGroup supports Istituto Natta in ISO 14001 certification

A joint effort, part of Natta's alternating school-work programme, to achieve environmental management certification for the school

Care for the community and environmental sustainability, as well as collaboration, cross-influence, and transversal experiences between school and work: these are the key words guiding **Giulio Natta Istituto Statale di Istruzione Superiore [State Institute of Higher Education] in Bergamo** in its joint effort with RadiciGroup to obtain **ISO 14001 Environmental Management Certification** for the school. Certifying a school's environmental management system as part of the educational curriculum, with the training support of an ISO 14001 certified company of the Group, is an ambitious pioneering project launched for the first time by a public school of higher education in Italy.

This new challenge, which is one of Istituto Natta's ongoing high-profile collaborative projects with RadiciGroup for its school-work programme, provides both partners with the opportunity to expand their competencies and ideas on how to improve performance in their respective fields.



The first step of the initiative was taken a few months ago at the headquarters of **Radici Novacips in Chignolo d'Isola (Bergamo - Italy)**, a Group company specializing in the **production of various types of engineering plastics**, materials used for numerous applications.

In this initial phase, Istituto Natta's teachers and a number of RadiciGroup employees participated in **training sessions focusing on risk assessment** and related assessment tools, as provided for by the ISO 14001 standard.

In the next phases of the project, the teachers who attended the above training sessions will teach their acquired specific knowledge to selected third and fourth year classes (about eighty students) of the *Liceo delle Scienze Applicate* [Upper Secondary School of Applied Sciences] and the *Istituto Biotecnologico Ambientale* [Technical Upper Secondary School of Biotechnology and Environmental Sciences]. The training courses will cover all the activities and procedures required for the certification process.



During the training programme, which will last two years, the instructors and students actively

engaged in the project will be assisted and supervised by an expert, who will ensure that the students learn the competencies required to operate in accordance with the ISO 14001 environmental standard. This standard is recognized and widely used by community- and environment-oriented companies.

“This project is a real opportunity for in-the-field school-company interaction, where different linguistic registers can give rise to a virtuous circle of information exchange, knowledge and experience,” stressed **Maria Amodeo, headmistress of Istituto Natta.** *“The training programme has a cultural connotation congenial to the way we think of school.”*

Istituto Natta’s decision to pursue its environmental certification path with the aid of a company that is already certified and has long been engaged in reporting the environmental impact of its business activities provides the students with the opportunity to get acquainted with environmental issues using a methodology combining theory and practice. This will stimulate in-depth study and thinking, and, at the same time, open a window onto the real problems that a company faces day in day out.

RadiciGroup, for its part, has the chance to interact with students, understand tomorrow’s needs, and look at itself through students’ eyes: all vital aspects in building a constructive relationship with the community, besides ensuring the prosperity of the business.

“At RadiciGroup we think that relations with schools of all kinds and levels are of fundamental importance to the exchange of competence and knowledge,” Roberta Beltrami, head of the RadiciGroup Education and Training Department, pointed out. “We try to help young people to better understand which skills are more in demand in the labour market and we want to stimulate them – in particular students attending technical and scientific secondary schools – to consider innovation, research and sustainability from a win-win perspective.”

What is ISO 14001? ISO 14001 is an international environmental management system (EMS) standard that specifies the requirements for an effective environmental management system of any organization. The standard can be certified, i.e., it is possible to obtain a certificate of conformity to the requirements of the standard from an accredited body operating in accordance with set rules. Achieving ISO 14001 certification is not compulsory, but is undertaken on a voluntary basis following the decision by a company/organization to establish/implement/maintain/improve an environmental management system of its own. It is important to note that ISO 14001 certification does not attest to an organization's particular environmental performance, or demonstrate a particularly low impact, but shows that the certified organization is equipped with a management system, which is able to control the environmental impact of its own activities, and looks to systematically improving it in a consistent, efficient and, above all, sustainable way. It may be useful to emphasize that ISO 14001 is not a product certification.

The requirements of the ISO 14001 standard can be applied to any type of organization and are laid out following the continuous improvement model defined by the Deming Cycle “Plan-Do-Check-Act” (devised by William Edwards Deming). In February 2012, work on the third revision of the ISO 14001 standard was begun, and the finale version was published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) on 15 September 2015 (14001:2015 "Environmental management systems").

RADICIGROUP – With approximately 3,000 employees, sales revenue of EUR 946 million in 2016 and a network of production and sales sites located throughout Europe, North America, South America and Asia, RadiciGroup is one of the world's leading producers of a wide range of chemical intermediates, polyamide polymers, engineering plastics, synthetic fibres and nonwovens. These products – the result of the Group's outstanding chemical expertise and vertically integrated polyamide production chain – have been developed for use in a variety of industrial sectors, such as: AUTOMOTIVE – ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS – CONSUMER GOODS – APPAREL – FURNISHINGS – CONSTRUCTION – HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES – SPORTS. The basis of the Group's strategy is a strong focus on innovation, quality, customer satisfaction and social and environmental sustainability. With its business areas - **Specialty Chemicals, Performance Plastics and Synthetic Fibres & Nonwovens** (Performance Yarn, Comfort Fibres and Extrusion Yarn), RadiciGroup is part of a larger industrial group that also includes textile machinery (ITEMA), energy (GEOGREEN) and hotel (SAN MARCO) businesses.

ISTITUTO GIULIO NATTA – In 1973, Natta started out as an independent Secondary School of Industrial Chemistry and over the years has considerably widened its offering of educational programmes. Today this Bergamo institute of excellence includes the following schools: Technical Upper Secondary School of Chemistry, Materials and Biotechnology (with specializations in Chemicals and Materials, Environmental Biotechnology and Health Care Biotechnology), Scientific Upper Secondary School of Applied Sciences, and Technical College for New Technologies of Life (two-year post upper secondary school diploma). All the information can be found at: www.nattabg.gov.it
