

Interview with the new President of EOQ

Patrick Mongillon, elected President of the European Organization for Quality (EOQ) in June, and also President of the company AQM Performance and Vice President of France Qualité, gave an interview to APQ for *Revista Qualidade* a few days before the 64th EOQ Congress in Portugal. Patrick Mongillon, who in 2016 was the first Frenchman elected European Quality Leader, talks about EOQ's main priorities now and for the future, gives his vision on Quality in Europe and other parts of the world and shares his expectations regarding the 64th EOQ Congress.

Q – As recently new elected president, can you share with us what will be some of EOQ key priorities and planned activities?

EOQ has established an ambitious strategy, based on a clear mission "Improve European society through the promotion of Quality in its broadest sense". It is important



that quality be global because there are more and more interactions and synergies between the various approaches to progress. Quality methods and tools form the common core of the system. Therefore, we need to promote an approach gathering safety, customer experience, quality of life at work, environment, health, operational excellence, and more. Because it really makes sense.

The EOQ's ambition for 2025 is clear: EOQ is the go-to organization regarding quality. To achieve this ambition, we have defined 5 Strategic Focus Areas:

1 – Members, partners and markets: Our members are the heart of EOQ and we are going to involve them more in the development of our products. To be concrete, a workshop will be organized in Porto in November to gather the expectations and ideas of our members to identify our priorities for solutions development.

We have reviewed our partnership structure with 3 types of partners:

- **Global Partners:** these are international not-for-profit organizations, mainly outside Europe. It aims to collaborate with global organizations to create even more member value. We must open new possibilities for Global and Regional non-profit organizations to connect to EOQ and we will continue to sign agreements to explore business opportunities together.
- **International Business Partners:** these are For-profit international organizations, running business in more than three countries (e.g. Bosch, Volvo, ATR Aircraft, ...). Currently, the EOQ has very few partners of this type, and a key area for development is to attract these organizations in order to increase benchmarking and good practice sharing.
- **National Business Partners, Non-for-profit or For-Profit organization** who distribute EOQ products in their country. This category covers Competence Center agents.

2 – Attractive offer for our members: The challenge for EOQ is to create value for its members. We will be working to better understand the expectations of our stakeholders and bring them a value proposition. Networking could undoubtedly be stronger, but also more sharing, building synergies from diversity, Personal, Professional and Organizational Development, and so on. We will see after our workshop in Porto.

3 – Marketing and communication: We've already done a lot in these areas, and we need to keep up the momentum. In concrete terms, this means for example more visits to our website, more followers on LinkedIn, etc. Our webinars are well attended, with at least 100 participants each. Here too, our webinar schedule is getting richer and richer, and covering a wide range of fascinating subjects.

4 – Organization: The aim of this Strategic Focus Area is to improve internal productivity, and we have made a lot of progress in this area.

5 – Digital transformation: This is a key point and EOQ has made up a lot of ground. Today, our actions on digital solutions have enabled us to reduce costs and we are continuing with improvements on our website.

Q – How do you see the current situation of quality in Europe and what comparisons would you underline between European Quality and the way quality is being adopted in other regions and countries outside of Europe?

Overall, we can be proud of the quality in Europe. I would like to illustrate my answer with 4 indicators from Qualibord, the quality dashboard that I created in 2018. The latest version in 2022 sheds light on the following points:

- The Global Sustainable Competitiveness Index (GSC index) measures the ability to generate and maintain a sustain in-

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clusive wealth without diminishing the future ability to maintain or increase current levels of wealth (180 countries). It includes 120 indicators from reliable sources, grouped into 5 pillars: natural capital, resource efficiency, intellectual and innovation capital, social capital and governance. The global average score is 45.3/100 and shows that the world is not in a very good state overall. An ideal score for a green, inclusive, and circular society would be 55! On this point, the Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Norway) score better, ahead of Western Europe, North America and North-East Asia. Japan is 13th, the USA 30th, China 33rd, Russia 50th and India 135th.

- As far as innovation is concerned, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Belgium are the champions of innovation. Europe is behind south Korea (number 1), Canada, Australia, the United States and Japan. But the gap between these countries and Europe is narrowing all the time, especially since 2020 and 2021.
- Employee engagement is a measure of well-being and motivation of employees

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falls concern Germany, Belgium, and the UK (-1%).

- In terms of attracting and retaining talent, the top 5 are: Switzerland, Singapore, Denmark, and USA. In terms of cities, San Francisco and Boston are in first place, followed by Zurich and Singapore in 6th place.

These indicators show that quality in Europe is good, if not very good. The USA is ahead of us in terms of employee commitment. This should give us food for thought.

Q – EQTM is a new framework developed by EOQ to recognize products with “European Quality”, and two Portuguese companies have already obtained this recognition. How do you foresee the evolution of this initiative?

EQTM is an easy-to-go product, and the dynamic development of this product in Portugal deserves to be highlighted. I would like to warmly thank Zoran Lekic, Pedro Saraiva and Ulf Gustavsson for their involvement and enthusiasm in the EQTM promotion.

To be honest, we're off to a shaky start and a little below our expectations. Even though we have issued 13 recognitions

in public and private organizations. Employee engagement reflects people involvement and enthusiasm in their work and in the workplace. Organizations with high levels of employee engagement achieve higher productivity, greater customer loyalty/engagement, improved safety, lower staff turnover and higher profitability, among other positive business outcomes. On employee engagement in companies, the global trend is down 2 points to 20%. USA leads the way with 34% of engaged employees. Latin America and South Asia with 24% dominate Eastern Europe (21%) and even more so in Western Europe (11%). France is far behind with only 7% of employees

EOQ CONGRESSES ARE CRUCIAL BECAUSE THEY BRING TOGETHER MORE THAN 500 PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD TO DISCUSS QUALITY. THE KEYNOTES, DEBATES AND ROUND TABLES PROVIDE AN INCOMPARABLE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE EXPERIENCES AND LEARN. NOT FORGETTING THE NETWORKING THAT MAKES FOR BENEFICIAL EXCHANGES.

committed employees (stable) and is trailing only Italy (5%). Iceland is number 1 in Europe with 22%. Portugal and Norway move up one point to 18%. The Netherlands is up by 2% to 12%. The

to date. We believe in this product, and we are mobilizing our members. 2024 and 2025 should see EQTM take off, and there are some good prospects, particularly in Norway.

Q – In November, APQ and Portugal are going to host the EOQ Congress, taking place for the fourth time in our country. How important do you think this event is going to be and what are your expectations about it?

Portugal is an exemplary organizer of EOQ Congresses: in terms of the number of congresses organized, the quality of the conferences and the number of participants. EOQ Congresses are crucial because they bring together more than 500 people from all over the world to discuss quality. The keynotes, debates and round tables provide an incomparable opportunity to share experiences and learn. Not forgetting the networking that makes for beneficial exchanges.

The EOQ Congress in Porto are the first face-to-face congress since the pandemic

and I think they're eagerly awaited as an opportunity to get together. The quality community will be able to "live again". Besides, the theme of "Quality for the future" is very well chosen. My main expectation is that this congress in Porto will be able to shape our vision of tomorrow's quality and the transformations that lie ahead.

Q – Can you share a final message, about future opportunities related with further quality development opportunities in Europe, Portugal and related challenges for APQ and our readers?

I'd like to pick up on an exchange we had at the end of August with ASQ (American Society for Quality). It was a very interesting meeting and EOQ, and no doubt APQ, have an opportunity to strengthen relations

with ASQ by aiming for mutual benefits. We also have a major challenge: attracting major European groups to join EOQ as International Business Partners. I believe that APQ and Portugal can be great to contribute to this goal.

It would also be in our interest to develop exchanges of best practice between EOQ members to better understand what quality actions are being undertaken in each country. Portugal would certainly be involved.

Finally, we must rely on our quality ambassadors, the European Quality Leaders, to share their exciting experiences and be the voice of quality in the countries as well as in Europe. And I wish Portugal and APQ every success in the future, as in 2021 when a Portuguese won the European Quality Leader. 🇵🇹

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