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Dr. Ömer Özkan receives prestigious award: 'European Quality Leader Award' for the first time for a Turkish manager

Dr. Ömer Özkan, SOCAR Turkey's Corporate Quality Group Manager, was awarded the title of "2025 European Quality Leader" by the European Organization for Quality (EOQ). This special award, given to only one individual each year, was presented to a Turkish executive for the first time in 2025.



The European Quality Leader Award is considered one of Europe's most prestigious recognitions in the field of corporate quality management. This special award, given to only one individual each year, was presented to a Turkish executive for the first time in 2025. Dr. Ömer Özkan, SOCAR Turkey's Corporate Quality Group Manager, represented Türkiye internationally by being awarded the title of "2025 European Quality Leader" by the European Organization for Quality (EOQ).

A CEREMONY AT THE SUMMIT OF EUROPE

Dr. Özkan, nominated as Türkiye's candidate by the Turkish Standards Institute (TSE), received his award from **EOQ President Patrick Mongillon** and **EOQ Secretary General Ulf Gustavsson** at the 66th EOQ Congress held in Oslo, Norway, on June 12-13. This meaningful ceremony brought together quality professionals from across Europe and was a source of great pride for our country to see a Turkish executive honored on this stage.

WHAT IS THE EUROPEAN QUALITY LEADER AWARD (EQL)?

The European Quality Leader Award is presented annually by the European Organization for Quality (EOQ) to executives who have made significant contributions to the field of quality management and achieved societal benefits. This award comprehensively evaluates not only corporate success but also criteria such as leadership skills, sustainable practices, social impact, and professional recognition.

Simply being included in this program, which recognizes outstanding individuals who shape Europe's vision of quality, is highly prestigious, and receiving the award means gaining global recognition. The award's evaluation process is rigorous and multifaceted. Candidates are evaluated based on four main criteria:

Professional achievements: Tangible achievements and contributions made by the candidate in the field of quality management throughout his/her career.

Leadership skills: Ability to inspire, guide and provide vision to their teams and industry.

Professional recognition: Respect and recognition in the field, both nationally and internationally.

Tangible success results: Measurable and demonstrable results of projects and practices implemented under your leadership. (Projects within the scope of sustainability, innovation, digital issues, etc.)

SUCCESS COMES FROM THE COMBINATION OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

The fact that Dr. Ömer Özkan was deemed worthy of this award by meeting all of these rigorous criteria demonstrates that his deep expertise and leadership qualities in this field are recognized internationally. Özkan, who has an academic career based in mechanical engineering, strengthened this technical background with an MBA and a PhD. Currently serving as the Corporate Quality Management Group Manager at SOCAR Türkiye, Özkan has gained extensive field experience by previously holding key positions in diverse and critical sectors such as automotive, natural gas, service, and manufacturing. Never abandoning his academic side, Özkan continues to pass on his knowledge and experience to younger generations by teaching at numerous universities. Numerous scientific studies published nationally and internationally prove his intellectual depth in this field. Furthermore, technical qualifications such as ISO lead auditor, UNDP energy manager, and Lean 6 Sigma certification reinforce his competence in the field. Özkan plays an active role not only within his own institution but also on numerous platforms such as the Turkish Quality Association (KalDer), TSE Technical Committees, and Kaizen evaluation boards. By acting as an evaluator in quality awards conducted in line with the EFQM model, it directly contributes to the development of Türkiye's quality ecosystem.

AGENDA

Dr. Ömer Özkan, a pioneer in quality, has reached the top of Europe

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The European Quality Leader Award is considered one of Europe's most prestigious recognitions in the field of corporate quality management. This special award, given to only one individual each year, was presented to a Turkish executive for the first time in 2025. Dr. Ömer Özkan, SOCAR Turkey's Corporate Quality Group Manager, was named "2025 European Quality Leader" by the European Organization for Quality (EOQ), becoming a pioneering figure representing Türkiye internationally.

This great honor is not only an individual career achievement; it is also a strong indicator of Türkiye's development and international competence in quality management.

A ceremony at the summit of Europe

Dr. Özkan, nominated as Türkiye's candidate by the Turkish Standards Institute (TSE), received his award from EOQ President Patrick Mongillon and EOQ Secretary General Ulf Gustavsson at the 66th EOQ Congress held in Oslo, Norway, on June 12-13. This meaningful ceremony brought together quality professionals from across Europe and was a source of great pride for our country to see a Turkish executive honored on this stage.

What is the European Quality Leader Award / European Quality Leader (EQL)?

The European Quality Leader Award is presented annually by the European Organization for Quality (EOQ) to executives who have made significant contributions to the field of quality management and achieved societal benefits. The award comprehensively evaluates not only organizational success but also criteria such as leadership skills, sustainable practices, social impact, and professional recognition.

While simply being included in this program, which rewards outstanding individuals who shape Europe's vision of quality, is a great prestige, receiving an award means gaining global recognition.

So, what makes this award so special?

The European Quality Leader Award is presented annually to recognize outstanding individuals who dedicate their time, energy, and extensive knowledge to advancing quality principles not only for their own institutions but for the benefit of all European society. This award is an honor presented to pioneering and inspiring leaders in their field who have made a global impact.

The judging process for the award is rigorous and multifaceted. Candidates are evaluated based on four main criteria:

Professional achievements: Tangible achievements and contributions made by the candidate in the field of quality management throughout his/her career.

Leadership skills: Ability to inspire, guide and provide vision to their teams and industry.

Professional recognition: Respect and recognition in the field, both nationally and internationally.

Tangible success results: Measurable and demonstrable results of projects and practices implemented under leadership. (Projects within the scope of sustainability, innovation, digital issues, etc.)

The fact that Dr. Ömer Özkan met all of these stringent criteria and was deemed worthy of this award demonstrates that his deep expertise and leadership qualities in this field are recognized at the international level.



Dr. Ömer Özkan's career is a multifaceted success story that combines theory and practice...

Özkan, who has a background in mechanical engineering and an academic background, has strengthened this technical background with a master's degree and a doctorate in business administration. Currently serving as Group Manager of Corporate Quality Management at SOCAR Türkiye, Özkan has gained extensive field experience by previously holding key positions in diverse and critical sectors such as automotive, natural gas, services, and manufacturing.

Özkan, who has never abandoned his academic pursuits, continues to share his knowledge and experience with younger generations by teaching at numerous universities. His numerous nationally and internationally published scientific studies attest to his intellectual depth in this field.

Additionally, his technical qualifications, including ISO lead auditor, UNDP energy manager, and Lean Six Sigma certification, reinforce his expertise in the field. He directly contributes to the development of Türkiye's quality ecosystem not only within his own organization but also through his active involvement in numerous platforms, including the Turkish Quality Association (KalDer), TSE Technical Committees, and Kaizen evaluation boards, as well as serving as an evaluator for quality awards conducted in accordance with the EFQM model.

A source of pride and inspiration for Türkiye

Dr. Ömer Özkan's being the first Turkish executive to win the European Quality Leader Award is not only a personal achievement, but also an international reflection of the level Türkiye has reached in the field of industry and quality management.

This success is an important source of inspiration for other managers, professionals, and young people in our country, and it is also an indication that Türkiye is taking the right steps in its journey towards quality and excellence.

WHAT IS EOQ?

- Founded in 1956, the European Organization for Quality (EOQ) is the most prestigious quality organization in Europe, with official quality institutions from 24 European countries as members.
- The European Organisation for Quality (EOQ) includes more than 70,000 individual members and 500,000 companies through its member and partner organisations in Europe and worldwide.
- Turkish Standards Institution (TSE) has been representing Türkiye as a member of EOQ in the areas covered by certification since 2001.
- EOQ is an interdisciplinary European organisation that, as coordinator and driving force of its member organisations, strives to promote effective improvements in the field of quality management. Its aim is to contribute to the development of European society by promoting quality in its broadest sense.

WHO IS OMER OZKAN?

He is a Mechanical Engineer, holds a master's degree in business administration and a doctorate.

He serves as the Corporate Quality Management Group Manager at SOCAR Türkiye. Previously, he has experience in the automotive, service, natural gas distribution, and plastics production sectors.

He teaches quality management, innovation management and entrepreneurship in undergraduate and graduate programs of various universities.

He is an IRCA approved ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001, ISO 27001, ISO 22301, ISO 50001, ISO 55001 lead auditor.

He is a UNIDO and UNDP certified energy manager. He is a Lean 6 SIGMA green belt.

Academically, he has 8 articles published in international journals, 4 book chapters and 4 international symposium proceedings.

He is a member of the Turkish Quality Association Quality Award Executive Board (KÖK). He has also served as lead evaluator in local, national, and European excellence award processes based on the EFQM Model since 2007.

He has been working in the Kaizen evaluation processes of various non-governmental organizations since 2016.

He is the chairman of the TSE-MTC (Mirror Technical Committee) 184 Circular Economy committee.

He is a member of TSE-MTC (Mirror Technical Committee) 139 Innovation Management committee.

He has a published research book series titled "Paradigm Shifters" consisting of three books on the changing dynamics of the Turkish Business World following the 2008 global crisis.

He speaks English fluently.