



## Feedback from delegates. EQALM Barcelona 2016

As in previous years, we undertook a survey monkey poll to ask all attendees at the annual Symposium on their thoughts and views. We had responses from 34 individuals. This was a decrease compared to the 55 we had at Bergen, but it was more in keeping with the previous response rate that we had from Toulouse (30). Again, the numbers are sufficiently large that we can be confident that it was a representative view from those attending.

The questions included some logistical aspects as well as the scientific content. It was thought by two thirds of respondents that the meeting was 'very organised'. A quarter of respondents considered it to be even better than that and placed it in the 'extremely organised' category. Once again this is a very strong endorsement of the effort and delivery of both the local team under the leadership of Emma Ventura and all the behind the scenes input from the Executive Board incorporating feedback and tips from previous organising teams.

The vast majority considered that the format was 'very useful'. Most people thought that the time allocation was broadly 'about right'; indeed everyone who expressed an opinion gave the Symposium Presentations a 'about right' mark. A few delegates would have preferred a little more time for General Discussion, Abstract Presentations and Working Groups but the vast majority, about three quarters, think we got it 'about right'.

Once again we have a slightly more difficult task in teasing out the subtleties on the feedback on specific topics. Usually the ratings can be predicted by the topic title, so that it was no surprise that general topics such as 'The Road to Perfect EQA' and 'Commutability' attained a Relevant/Very relevant ratings of over 90%. Most titles topped the 75% approval rating, with only a couple of discipline-specific topics dropping below that. Even they were still 'positive' and so it remains my personal view that, and I have expressed this before, we need the mix of generic and specific topics in the programme to make sure that we always have something for everyone.

Most delegates believed that their knowledge and skills improved 'a moderate amount', which was just ahead of 'a lot'. This is slightly down on last year but at least one delegate said 'a great deal', so my thanks to him/her!

The event was considered to be 'about the same as expected' by two thirds and 'better than expected' by the rest. This to me remains a positive endorsement of what we have achieved. It will be interesting to note how Dublin stacks up, given that the Scientific Committee [SC] will have a big say in the programme next year.

As before, we asked for feedback on what delegates would like as topics for future meetings. There were a smaller number of delegates who gave active feedback on this, but there were a couple of strong messages that came through. A better balance across all disciplines was requested, with the view that can be a tendency of the programme to be a bit chemistry-centric. Also there was a request to have as many countries represented as possible, if only in the free communication sections. I think these points will be taken on board.

As before, it would be remiss not to mention the generous sponsorship that made the Symposium possible. The Executive Board would like to thank all of the speakers, the working group members and Chairs and all the delegates for contributing to make a very distinctly friendly, yet informative, Symposium.

Thanks to Xavier Albe for conducting the Survey Monkey poll, but any errors in this summary are mine alone.

Finlay MacKenzie, Secretary EQALM.