



### **LARGE-CAP FIRM OF THE YEAR IN EUROPE**

1. EQT
2. Cinven
3. CVC Capital Partners

Since Thomas von Koch took the helm in 2014, Swedish firm EQT has moved onto another plane and 2016 was the year it cemented itself as leader of the next generation of industry giants.

In April, EQT found itself inside the hallowed Top 10 in the PEI 300, with a five-year fundraising total of more than \$18.5 billion. And this figure didn't even include the debut funds it closed across three new segments or geographies in 2016. First came the €530 million mid-market credit fund in April, then the €566 million venture fund in May, and finally the \$726 million US mid-market private equity fund.

What's more, the firm hired around 100 people globally and completed a slew of deals, including pulling off three high-profile European take-privates. Among its gems on the exit side is Atos Medical, which scooped a PEI Operational Excellence Award, impressing the judges with true operational value creation and a double-digit IRR.

### **FIRM OF THE YEAR IN THE NORDICS**

1. EQT
2. Nordic Capital
3. Altor

EQT may be well on its way to becoming the "Swedish Blackstone", having diversified among asset classes, strategies and geographies to touch all corners of the globe, but the Stockholm-headquartered firm has not abandoned its roots.

For the second year in a row, Thomas von Koch's firm took the crown in the Nordic region, impressing the industry not only with its fundraising and deal-making prowess but with its unshakeable goal of future-proofing businesses, particularly pertinent in Northern Europe, where investing responsibly is more than just talk.

EQT has brought on "disruptive" technology experts both to work with its newly-funded venture platform and to turbo-charge the business models of its mature portfolio companies and, crucially, the firm itself.

On the deal side, EQT sealed full or partial exits for four Nordic businesses, including Operational Excellence Award winner Atos Medical, and completed the public-to-private of software business IFS.

### **LENDER OF THE YEAR IN EUROPE**

1. EQT Credit
2. Intermediate Capital Group
3. GSO Partners

EQT Credit closed its first fund focused on direct lending to European mid-market companies in 2016, surpassing its €500 million target to reach €530 million, one of the factors behind its victory in the Lender of the Year in Europe award. The fund was launched in 2015 and has deployed circa 60 percent of its capital across ten deals in Europe.

Transactions included companies in the healthcare, industrial and telecommunications sectors in the Nordic region, Germany and the UK. It lends capital to support growth, acquisitions and refinancing. EQT also

partnered with CVC Credit Partners on a £110 million (\$137 million; €128 million) unitranche debt transaction. The borrower, Paymentsense, is a UK-based card processing company providing services to small and medium-sized businesses



#### **LENDER OF THE YEAR IN EUROPE (Private Debt Investor)**

1. EQT Credit
2. Ares Management
3. Alcentra

“EQT Credit has become an integrated capital provider for sponsors and corporates across the credit risk spectrum,” says Paul Johnson, partner at EQT Credit. He’s referring to the final closing in April of the EQT Mid-Market Credit fund – focused on answering the increasing demand for long-term flexible debt capital from mid-sized European businesses.

The Mid-Market Credit strategy is part of a three-pronged investment platform, which includes the Credit Opportunities funds – focused on operationally sound businesses challenged by excess leverage or the need for additional capital – and the rapidly-growing Senior Debt programme.

Andrew Konopelski, partner and head of EQT Credit, believes that having three well-established strategies provides the firm with several competitive advantages, including the ability to provide flexible financing solutions across the capital structure and maintaining “a strong relative value mindset, particularly in the current environment with increasing signs of risk-amnesia”.

Konopelski also believes part of the secret behind the successful EQT Credit platform is the support from EQT’s “local-with-locals” presence, with 200 investment advisory professionals across 14 offices, plus the knowledge and operational experience of EQT’s proprietary 250-person industrial advisor network, assisting in selecting the strongest credits and avoiding losses due to enhanced insight into companies.