



**Confédération Européenne de l'Industrie de la Chaussure**  
**European Confederation of the Footwear Industry**

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**Poiana Brasov** – *The third partnership meeting of the Leonardo Project “Step to Sustainability” took place in Poiana Brasov, Romania on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> September, in connection with the 15<sup>th</sup> Romanian Textiles and Leather Conference. The committed partners, coming from all around Europe and led by the Footwear Technology Centre of Portugal, met to present the results of a survey on what European companies know, do and need on sustainable manufacturing, and to discuss the next steps ahead.*

In this occasion, it was the green surroundings of Poiana Brasov that welcomed the international consortium, who is working on creating and developing a new occupational profile in the sustainable manufacturing of footwear.

The European Confederation of the Footwear Industry presented the results of a survey carried out to assess the interests and needs of the European footwear companies in terms of sustainability and the activities already in place. Out of 80 companies interviewed, 64% declared not to have a strategy in terms of sustainability, but were very interested in learning more, while 70% indicated to suffer from shortage of skills workers, particularly in the production area. The majority of the companies also recognized the lack of employees with innovative materials and energy rationalization knowledge.

The efforts are now concentrated on identifying the exact competences and skills needed, and developing the necessary curriculum on sustainable footwear production. During the meeting, the Spanish Footwear Technological Centre, INESCOP, underlined *“Creating a new occupation and qualification profile in terms of sustainability in the footwear industry is a big challenge, not only in terms of transversal skills and competences to be identified but also of the level of qualification and the possibility to be integrated in different national qualification frameworks.”* By the end of September 2014, the final draft of the new occupational profile “Expert in Sustainable Footwear Manufacturing” will be finalised, while the different modules of the necessary training programme have started to materialize.

The partners of the “Step to Sustainability” will meet again in February 2015 in Brno, Czech Republic, in articulation with the international fair KABO, where the Czech Footwear and Leather Association (COKA) will present a further step towards sustainability in the footwear industry.

