



23rd January 2015

S. Joao da Madeira, Porto – “How to ensure the continuation of European luxury and high-end footwear?” A new European project under Erasmus+, “High-End Shoe (HES) - Innovative Training for Luxury Footwear Manufacturing”, expects to provide the best conditions for it by empowering footwear technicians and designers with the necessary knowledge and skills to become Taylor- made technicians for luxury footwear.

The kick-off meeting of the Erasmus+ project “High-End Shoe (HES) - Innovative Training for Luxury Footwear Manufacturing” took place on the 22 & 23rd January in S. Joao da Madeira, Portugal, at the premises of the leader, the Portuguese Footwear Technology Centre (CTCP). The strategic partnership includes three technology centres- the CTCP, the Spanish INESCOP and the Italian Politecnico Calzaturiero- the French vocational training centre le Lycée du Dauphiné, the Czech Footwear Association and the European Confederation of the Footwear Industry.

The three years initiative aims to support and perpetuate the worldwide reputation of European luxury and high-end footwear through the creation and development of an innovative ICT vocational training course targeted to a wide range of footwear groups - VET students, new talented designers, footwear workers/technicians, and new entrepreneurs.

For that purpose, the partners will elaborate a preliminary assessment of skills, knowledge and competences required to manufacture a luxury product, which should serve as basis for identifying the necessary occupational profile on Taylor-Made Technician. It is expected that stakeholders intervening in the footwear supply chain- from the conception, design, and production to quality control, distribution and retail- will be invited to contribute with what they consider essential for qualifying as luxury footwear.

The meeting discussions also addressed the importance to clarify the sometimes confusion between luxury and premium / high-end products. Certainly the first ones respond to subjective connotations like “desire” and “dream”, difficult to address in the transfer of skills and competences. However, other factors like exclusive selection of materials, original design, handcrafted processes, customised fitting, and exhaustive quality control, to name a few, require being identified and taught.

The international consortium is convinced that the project will facilitate the path for a new generation of exclusive luxury technicians/ designers in Europe, consequently consolidating the European luxury footwear in the world, while increasing the job opportunities in a more and more dynamic and innovative European footwear sector.

More information soon available in www.highendshoe.eu .

