



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

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**Join us at “Green Shoes for a Sustainable Life”**  
**International Footwear Workshop on Sustainability at GDS fair**

Brussels, 28 June 2016

*Is your business prepared to address the social and environmental challenges of globalisation and maintain its popularity among industry partners and consumers? What more could you do? Join the International Footwear Workshop on Sustainability “GREEN SHOES FOR A SUSTAINABLE LIFE” in GDS fair, Düsseldorf, on 28 July 2016, and you will learn how to add sustainability in your footwear collections in order to increase the value of your business. A smart sustainability strategy will help you prepare for future risks, anticipate shareholder and consumers concerns, become environmentally, and socially responsible, and establish yourself as a preferred provider for consumers and industry partners.*

With this message, the European Confederation of the Footwear Industry (CEC) together with the other European partners of the “Step To Sustainability” project call upon footwear companies to participate in the International Footwear Workshop on Sustainability entitled “Green Shoes for a Sustainable life” organised at the GDS shoe fair on 28 July 2016. During the workshop, companies will better understand how by adopting sustainable strategies they can increase their business value and sales whilst having a positive influence on social and environmental conditions.

The workshop is being organised by the EU funded project “Step To Sustainability”, the aim of which is to create and pilot a new occupation and qualification profile and corresponding training course in the area of sustainable manufacturing in footwear. The project addresses the needs of companies wishing to engage in sustainable manufacturing by elaborating a new qualification profile which will equip students with the necessary skills and competences to deal with sustainability issues and contribute to increasing the competitiveness of footwear manufacturers.

Businesses have the opportunity to introduce positive changes in their production choices, which will increase the popularity of their products and brand among consumers and business partners alike. Such a strategy will benefit not only the environment and enhance social responsibility, but will also allow businesses to enjoy numerous advantages such as increasing revenue and cutting costs, increasing employee attraction and retention rates, creating a healthy workplace leading to greater productivity, and enhancing relationships with stakeholders and communities.

At the workshop, there will be a presentation on the results of the Step 2 Sustainability project by a Portuguese SME, which participated in the pilot, as well as two panels of relevant industry representatives, who will explain best practices in the footwear sector. The first panel will focus on the manufacturing phase with presentations from El Naturalista and BATA Brands as well as the organisation LeatherNaturally; while the second will present the retailers’ approach to ensuring sustainability with contributions from Deichmann, Zumnorde, and Avocado Store GmbH.

Do not miss this opportunity, save the date in your calendar and register to the Workshop “Green shoes for a sustainable life” in GDS on 28 July. You will learn how to be among the frontrunners in sustainability!