



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

Rue de la Science n°14b- 1040 Bruxelles
Tel. +32.2.808.44.52- www.cec-footwearindustry.eu

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Kick-off Meeting of New Erasmus+ Project
on Digital Skills for Textile, Clothing, Leather, and Footwear Industries

Under the new Erasmus+ project “Digital TCLF 2025”, the European Confederation of the Footwear Industry and its project partners will help the textile, clothing, leather, and footwear (TCLF) sectors benefit from digitalisation along their value chains by delineating the digital skills and emerging occupational profiles which will boost their competitiveness. The project is an initiative of the recognised social partners in the TCLF sectors at European level and was launched at its kick-off meeting in Brussels on 20 January 2017.

At a time when digital technologies are rapidly transforming the way we produce and sell to consumers, the European Confederation of the Footwear Industry (CEC) has joined efforts with its European social partners, the European Apparel and Textile Confederation (Euratex), the European Confederation of Tanners and Dressers (Cotance), and the trade union IndustriAll Europe, with the support of SPIN360, to assist their respective TCLF sectors to respond to businesses’ needs for digital skills development under the new Erasmus+ project “Digital TCLF 2025” recently approved by the European Commission.

Businesses must prepare to face the implications of digital change and, in particular, know how to engage digitally with suppliers, partners and employees in addition to customers and demanding consumers. The two-year project intends therefore to facilitate the ground for the provision of necessary skills to support the digital transformation of the fashion industries, and immersion in the fourth industrial revolution. Activities will focus on forecasting the digital skills required for the capitalisation of digital opportunities and innovations; researching and mapping the current offer of Vocational Education and Training (VET), and engaging with VET providers with a view to adapt and create new curricula.

Nine emerging digital occupations previously identified by the social partners under the TCLF European Sectoral Skills Council are the starting point for consideration, and include inter alia managerial, data analysis and 3D engineers’ positions. Conscious of the great impact of digitalisation on industrial production, the social partners recognise the urgent need to reform vocational education and training, including lifelong learning, to address the mismatch in the supply and demand of digital skills and to increase workers’ employability. In the coming months, the project partners will work together to fine-tune these occupations and adapt them to the specific digital requirements of each of the sectors involved.

The CEC, which has completed several studies on skills and market needs under other European projects, will lead the work on forecasting the businesses requirements in digital skills for each sector at different stages of the production process in collaboration with companies. The data and outcomes of the study will be validated by a committee, and subsequently published in a Roadmap for Digital Skills Development, which will be used to inform VET providers about the emerging digital skills needs and provide suggestions regarding the adaptation of existing educational programmes.



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Digital transformation at different levels of production, from design to manufacturing processes, will allow companies to increase their performance and efficiency as well as provide new tools for creativity and innovation, but this will only be possible if employees have the necessary digital skills to carry out this transformation. By identifying such skills and training requirements, "Digital TCLF 2025" is taking the first step to address the gap between current education and training programmes and the emerging digital skills' needs of industrial production in these four fashion sectors.