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### **High-End Shoe Project creates a new Qualifications Profile in Luxury Footwear Manufacturing**

*European Excellence in manufacturing luxury and high-end shoes will soon be given a boost thanks to a new training programme developed under the European Erasmus+ funded project High-End Shoe (HES). The first step has recently been completed with the design of a new qualification and occupational specialised profile, the Luxury Footwear Manufacturing Technician, that includes the specific skills, knowledge and competences required. European footwear companies will soon be able to benefit from this innovative training course that will contribute to strengthening the high-added value and competitiveness of European luxury footwear.*

Europe has a long tradition in producing luxury and high-end footwear which is appreciated worldwide, but with an ageing workforce and constant innovations in materials and techniques, companies need to ensure the transfer of expertise and savoir-faire, as well as upgrade skills and competences to produce more added-value luxury footwear. The European Erasmus+ project, High-End Shoe was conceived to reinforce the manufacturing of luxury and high-end shoes with the recognition of a new occupational profile and the development of a specific training programme in order to bridge the training gap in high-end footwear manufacturing in Europe.

Carmen Arias, Secretary General of the European Confederation of the Footwear Industry, also partner in the project explains: "There is a worldwide recognition of the exclusivity of European luxury shoes and the brands behind, but there is currently no profile and training programme which corresponds to the skills of a technician capable of manufacturing them. We expect that the project output, the training course, will become an indispensable tool for manufacturing European luxury footwear."

As a first step, the international consortium has developed a new qualification and occupational profile titled *Luxury Footwear Manufacturing Technician* equivalent to Level 4 of the European Qualification Framework (EQF). The new profile will attest the highly specialised and multidimensional knowledge, skills and competences of luxury footwear manufacturers who will obtain the qualification after completing the corresponding vocational training.

Developed with the guidance of evidence-based research on training needs and opportunities within the luxury segment, and adapted from existing professional profiles in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Czech Republic, and France, the new course and training programme will support and enhance craftsmanship, know-how, and high specialisation, which are the hallmarks of luxury and include the specialised activities crucial to the luxury segment. The training will provide multi-dimensional, versatile, and adaptable skills for the technicians to be skilled in all footwear workstations and capable of switching from one task to another.

The qualification profile targets young talented designers, entrepreneurs, and other footwear technicians, and during the pilot phase, a few companies will be invited to follow selected modules in a virtual classroom. With highly specialised technical skills tailored to the needs of European high-end and luxury footwear manufacturers, the holders of the upcoming qualification *Luxury Footwear Manufacturing Technician* will be highly employable in Europe's greatly valued luxury sector.



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For more information, please visit the project website at [www.highendshoe.eu](http://www.highendshoe.eu)