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Learn2Work will bring new young talent to Footwear Manufacturing

At a time when youth unemployment remains high in many European countries, an ambitious European project titled "Learn2Work", funded by the Erasmus+ programme, is working to deliver an innovative training methodology to attract young people and prepare them with the technical and soft skills required by the globalised working environment. The training will provide young people with new career options and the opportunity to work in the footwear sector where there is currently a high demand for workers with specific technical knowledge and skills.

Despite the economic recovery from the 2008 financial and economic crisis, youth unemployment rates are still high in Europe, particularly in southern countries such as Greece, Spain, and Italy, where more than 40% of young people are currently unemployed, whereas the European footwear industry is struggling to find the suitable workforce to engage in their factories of tomorrow. In this context, the Erasmus+ project Learn2Work was conceived by the European Confederation of the Footwear Industry (CEC) and its project partners as a response to tackle the sector's significant skills mismatches with a training methodology more attractive to the "e-connected" new generations exposed to unlimited information, and preferring work based experiences.

Learn2Work specifically targets NEET people - young people who are Not in Education, Employment, or Training, who mainly face a high risk of continued and future unemployment as well as lower wage prospects. The new training model is based on learning by doing in accordance with the successful Danish "Production School model", in which young people discover and expand their abilities, enabling them to pursue and succeed in a specialised professional vocation. In accordance with a recent survey carried out by the partners, the training will focus on the occupations that are expected to suffer the most from a shortage of skilled workers in the next five years.

Inspired by the Danish model, the project's training pathway will also include soft skills, which will ensure that students learn how to be professional, reliable, and good problem-solvers among other qualities. Soft skills are a necessary complement to technical skills in order to be successful in a complex economy that requires adaptability and teamwork as well as other life skills.

The Learn2Work training model will offer young people the chance to develop a career in a creative and innovative industry which represents one of Europe's cultural and commercial achievements. By helping footwear companies reach their full potential, the new generation of trained workers will contribute to maintaining the excellence of footwear manufacturing in Europe.



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For more information about the project, visit the Learn2Work website at <http://learn2work.eu/en/>

