



5 October 2017, Brussels

“Shoes Made in EU: The European Shoemaker” launches Online Course

“Shoes Made in EU”, a European project which aims to boost Vocational Education and Training (VET) in shoemaking in Europe through the upgrading of a European qualification profile in footwear manufacturing, is about to launch its new online course in the project website. Shoemakers and young students interested in working in the footwear sector are encouraged to register for free and access the comprehensive course material, which covers all the stages of footwear manufacturing and much more.

The European footwear sector is a strong and dynamic industry, with footwear exports having increased by 40% in quantity and 90% in value in the last 7 years. Yet the sector continues facing a shortage of skilled workers and lack of robust educational and training programmes for footwear manufacturers in some geographical areas where industry is present. To address this problem and help maintain Europe’s strong position in footwear manufacturing, the European Confederation of the Footwear Industry (CEC) and other European partners developed the EU funded project “Shoes Made in EU” that provides an updated profile and training programme for current and aspiring shoemakers to obtain the necessary skills to make them successfully employable and enjoy a career in a sector which needs to retain and upgrade innovative skills and know-how. Project partners have recently launched the online training course, covering all the phases of footwear manufacturing as well as a comprehensive array of topics related to the industry and the experience of working in the sector. The course, displayed in a dynamic online platform, includes presentations, videos, exercises and self-evaluation tests. On 25 September 2017, the European Confederation of the Footwear Industry held a Multiplier Event in Brussels to present the online platform and the 14 units and to demonstrate the relevance of the Footwear Manufacturing Technician in today’s footwear industry.

The training model is an adaptation and upgrade of existing training models in Portugal and Germany. Furthermore, the course respects the principles of EQF (European Qualifications Framework) and ECVET (European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training), which will facilitate the integration in the different education and training systems at European level, and therefore will support the mobility of footwear workers in the EU and increase their employability.

To increase the reach and accessibility of the course, the material will be also available in Italian, Portuguese, German, French, and Polish (besides EN). This specialised online footwear training course will be particularly useful for companies in countries and regions with a low Vocational Education and Training offer, as is the case in Poland. Poland will be the first country to integrate this profile and curriculum, but the partners of “Shoes Made in EU” will also promote the Shoemaker model at European level to facilitate its adoption in other European countries and meet the sector’s need for multi-skilled, versatile, and highly professional footwear manufacturers.