



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

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Entrepreneurship and Business Opportunities
for Young People in Sustainable Footwear



During the Entrepreneurship School organised by ThinkYoung from 27 to 31 March 2017 in Madrid, young students got the chance to meet and interchange best environmental practices with successful entrepreneurs. One of the key note interventions came from the shoe family company Pikolinos, who introduced participants to the career opportunities offered by the European footwear sector, an innovative industry that combines craftsmanship with the latest technologies to produce creative high added value consumer products while involving their workforce in social and environmental responsibility, which contribute to more efficient manufacturing while reducing the global warming of our Earth.

The footwear industry in Europe enjoys durable commercial success in fashion and its exports to outside Europe have increased by 39% in quantity and 83% in value in the last six years, providing many opportunities for young entrepreneurs to maintain the quality, innovativeness, and relevance of the sector, and as the sector evolves, to increasingly adopt sustainable practices.

On 27 March 2017, during the Entrepreneurship School Week, focused on sustainability and organised in Madrid by the think tank ThinkYoung, future entrepreneurs learned about business opportunities in the footwear sector from Vice-President Rosana Perán of the shoe company Pikolinos. In keeping with its push for greater sustainability, Pikolinos is one of the companies which are using the new footprint calculation tool developed under the European LIFE+ project CO2Shoe to measure the carbon footprint of their shoe models throughout their entire lifecycle.

The project, led by the Spanish footwear technology centre INESCOP and supported among other partners by the European Confederation of the Footwear Industry (CEC) and the Federation of Spanish Footwear Industries (FICE), is helping European footwear companies lead in the area of sustainable production and provide its consumers with more environmentally friendly products. The CEC, which actively engages in the promotion of learning and working opportunities in the footwear sector for young people, underlines the value of enhancing sustainability in the sector and encourages European footwear companies and young entrepreneurs to create responsible business models, which are appreciated by consumers and necessary for the wellbeing of our current and future generations.

During her discussions with the young participants, Ms. Perán explained how Pikolinos was currently testing the CO2Shoe carbon footprint calculation tool on several of its footwear models and would



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soon know which stages of their shoes' lifecycle produced the most carbon dioxide, and explore and apply possible options that can minimise their carbon footprint.

Pikolinos is indeed one of the best Spanish examples of a successful sustainable business model from which young people interested in the footwear sector can learn. With the sector currently experiencing an ageing workforce, new generations of entrepreneurs have the chance to shape the future of footwear business by adopting sustainable strategies that increase their business value and sales whilst having a positive influence on social and environmental conditions in our society.

More information about the European project at www.co2shoe.eu