

SHOEPRO Project Launches Innovative Modular Curriculum to Drive Digital and Green Transformation in the Footwear Industry

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The SHOEPRO project is proud to announce the completion of its new **Modular Curriculum on Footwear Manufacturing**, specifically designed to equip the workforce with essential **digital skills** and **eco-design expertise**. Co-funded by the **European Union** under the Erasmus+ program, this initiative represents a strategic partnership between the **University of Zagreb Faculty of Textile Technology (TTF)**, the **Croatian Employers' Association (HUP)**, and the **Centro Tecnológico do Calçado de Portugal (CTCP)**.

The footwear sector currently faces significant challenges, including an **ageing workforce**—with 36% of employees over the age of 50—and a critical **skills gap** in the face of rapid technological change. To address these needs, SHOEPRO developed an agile, "ready to use" training program focused on the twin pillars of modern manufacturing: **digitalization and sustainability**.

A Curriculum Built on Industry Needs The curriculum was developed following an extensive survey of 29 footwear companies across Croatia and Portugal. The results highlighted a pressing need for training in **3D design, automation, and sustainable production**. In response, the modular curriculum consists of two independent yet complementary modules, each worth **4 ECTS credits (120 hours of workload)**:

- **Module 1: Digital Skills for Footwear Design and Modelling** – Focuses on 2D and 3D footwear modelling, virtual prototyping, and the principles of **3D printing** to accelerate product development.
- **Module 2: Eco-Design and Waste Management in the Footwear Sector** – Equips participants with skills in selecting environmentally friendly materials, performing **Life Cycle Assessments (LCA)**, and managing waste according to circular economy principles.

Empowering the Next Generation

Designed as a **micro-credential**, the program offers a flexible alternative to traditional degrees, allowing for targeted upskilling and reskilling of both current workers and young students entering the field. The curriculum is tailored for technicians, designers, and innovative entrepreneurs who wish to master modern tools like CAD/CAM systems and sustainable "cradle-to-cradle" production methods.

"The main goal of the SHOEPRO project is to unlock the potential of the footwear industry by responding to current and future qualification requirements," the project team stated. By integrating digital tools with green chemistry and waste reduction strategies, the SHOEPRO curriculum ensures that European footwear manufacturing remains competitive and sustainable in a global market.

For more information about the **SHOEPRO Modular Curriculum** and upcoming training opportunities, please visit the project website at <https://shoeapro.eu/>.



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