

Portugal hosts Kick-Off Meeting for European SHOEPRO project: Driving the digital and green transition in footwear

November 30, 2024

From November 26 to 29, CTCP - Centro Tecnológico do Calçado de Portugal (Footwear Technology Center of Portugal), hosted the kick-off meeting of the European SHOEPRO project, an initiative co-funded by the European Union that brings together partners from Portugal and Croatia to advance the digital and green transition in the footwear sector. With the participation of the Footwear Technology Center of Portugal (CTCP) as a key partner, the meeting marked the beginning of a collaborative effort involving companies, associations, and academic institutions from both countries.

The four-day event featured workshops, technical visits, and collaborative planning sessions designed to foster knowledge sharing and practical engagement across key areas. Workshops delved into critical topics such as sustainable materials, rapid prototyping, process automation, and the integration of digital technologies in green production processes. Croatian stakeholders, including representatives from companies like Ivančica d.d., Borovo d.d., and Kostelar d.o.o., as well as academic (University of Zagreb Faculty of Textile Technology) and employer associations (Croatian Employers' Association), joined their Portuguese counterparts to explore the latest trends and innovations reshaping the industry.

Technical visits to industry leaders

Participants had the unique opportunity to visit leading companies in the Portuguese footwear cluster, including Armipex, TECO, Sifac, Dias Ruivo, and Mind S.A., as well as the Footwear Museum. These visits offered firsthand insights into cutting-edge technologies, sustainable practices, and innovative solutions currently being deployed in Portugal, setting a high benchmark for the industry's evolution.

Laying the foundation for future innovation

An important outcome of the meeting was the establishment of a roadmap to develop innovative curricula aimed at equipping the next generation of professionals with the skills needed to navigate and lead in a digitally transformed, sustainable industry. This collaborative approach ensures that the footwear sector remains competitive, resilient, and aligned with the European Union's sustainability and innovation goals.

Strengthening Portugal-Croatia collaboration

The collaboration between Portuguese and Croatian stakeholders underscores the transnational nature of the SHOEPRO project. By bridging expertise across borders, the project is creating a robust network of knowledge and resources that will drive systemic change in the sector. Croatian participants contributed diverse perspectives during the workshops, particularly on 3D printing, ESG practices, and customized approaches to production, enriching the discourse on industry transformation.



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About SHOEPRO

The SHOEPRO project represents a significant milestone in the European footwear sector's journey toward sustainability and technological excellence. By uniting leaders from across the industry and academia, the project is catalyzing innovation and collaboration, ensuring that the sector thrives in an era of rapid change.

The SHOEPRO project is a European initiative co-funded by the European Union. Its mission is to support the digital and green transition in the footwear sector by fostering collaboration between companies, associations, and academic institutions across Europe.

For more information:

<https://www.shoeopro.eu>

Partners

Croatian Employers' Association: <https://www.hup.hr/>

Centro Tecnológico do Calçado de Portugal: <https://www.ctcp.pt/>

University of Zagreb Faculty of Textile Technology: <https://www.ttf.unizg.hr/en>



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