



HUP
CROATIAN EMPLOYERS'
ASSOCIATION



UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB
FACULTY OF TEXTILE
TECHNOLOGY



CENTRO TECNOLÓGICO DO
CALÇADO

PRESS RELEASE: ShoePro: Integrated Action for Building VET Curricula and Training Opportunities in Croatia & Portugal for Digital and Green Transformation in the Footwear Sector

Project 2024-1-HR01-KA210-VET-000251356

ShoePro Project Concludes with Final Meeting in Croatia

Date: 11-13 March 2026

Venue: Zagreb, Pregrada, Ivanec (Croatia)

The final meeting of the ShoePro project took place from 11 to 13 March 2026 in Zagreb, Pregrada and Ivanec, Croatia, bringing together partners from Portugal and Croatia to review achievements, share insights and explore future collaboration opportunities.

The meeting was hosted by the Croatian Employers' Association (HUP), with the Faculty of Textile Technology of the University of Zagreb (TTF) as co-host. Participants included representatives from HUP, TTF and the Centro Tecnológico do Calçado de Portugal (CTCP).

The three-day programme combined strategic discussions with practical industry engagement. Following the arrival of the Portuguese delegation on 11 March, the official activities began on 12 March at HUP's premises in Zagreb. The session provided an overview of HUP's role in supporting companies, promoting sectoral dialogue and contributing to vocational education and training initiatives.

The day continued with company visits that offered valuable insights into industrial practices and skills needs. At Kostelar, in Pregrada, participants explored production processes related to automotive components, with a focus on workforce development and industry challenges. Although outside the footwear sector, the visit enabled a broader discussion on skills requirements in manufacturing environments.



Co-funded by
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The second visit took place at Ivančica, a footwear company based in Ivanec. Here, partners gained direct insight into footwear production processes, technological requirements and the range of skills needed across different stages of manufacturing. These visits played a key role in connecting project outcomes with real industry needs.

On 13 March, the final project meeting was held at TTF. Partners reviewed the overall implementation of the project, confirming that activities had been successfully carried out in line with the initial objectives. Key outputs included the industry survey, the development of a training curriculum, the Knowledge Hub platform and a range of dissemination activities.

Discussions also focused on finalising remaining deliverables and preparing the project's final report. The partners highlighted the relevance of the developed curriculum, which integrates input from stakeholders in both countries and reflects the current needs of the footwear sector.

Beyond the project results, the meeting also opened space for future collaboration. Partners identified several potential areas for joint initiatives, including the integration of robotics and artificial intelligence in industry, the development of tailored training programmes and addressing sustainability challenges such as greenwashing.

The programme concluded with a presentation of TTF's research and educational activities, including visits to its laboratories and the Department of Textile Chemistry and Ecology. This provided further insight into innovation capacities and the role of research in supporting sustainable transformation in the sector.

The ShoePro project concludes with strengthened cooperation between partners and a solid foundation for future initiatives supporting skills development and innovation in the footwear industry.

