

INTERNATIONAL FOOTWEAR WORKSHOP “GREEN SHOES FOR A SUSTAINABLE LIFE” TO BE HELD DURING GDS

gds From 26 to 28 July 2016 trade visitors from the shoe sector will be able to learn about the current trends and innovations revolving around shoes and accessories at GDS – Global Destination for Shoes & Accessories in Düsseldorf. Since the awareness of sustainability in the European footwear sector is increasing and seen as a long-lasting trend in business strategies, the European Confederation of the Footwear Industry (CEC) together with the other European partners of the “Step To Sustainability” project call upon footwear companies to participate in the International Footwear Workshop on Sustainability. The workshop entitled “Green Shoes for a Sustainable life” will be organised at the GDS shoe fair on 28 July 2016. During the workshop, companies will learn how they can increase their business value and sales whilst having a positive influence on social and environmental conditions by adopting sustainable strategies.



The workshop is being organised by the EU funded project “Step To Sustainability”, the aim of which is to create and pilot a new occupation and qualification profile and corresponding training course in the area of sustainable manufacturing in footwear. The project addresses the needs of companies wishing to engage in sustainable manufacturing by elaborating a new qualification profile, which will equip students with the necessary skills and competences to deal with sustainability

issues and contribute to increasing the competitiveness of footwear manufacturers.



Applying sustainability to industry is also an important step to take. Environmental sustainability is certainly increasing in the European footwear sector. The footwear industry contributes to and is affected by the environmental degradation and social challenges that society is now facing. What initially was considered as an external environmental regulation to comply with, meaning an obligation, is now becoming part of the DNA of some companies. By introducing positive changes in production choices, compa-

nies can increase the popularity of their products and brand among consumers and business partners alike.

Carmen Arias Castellano, General Secretary of the CEC - European Confederation of the Footwear Industry stated: “Not only the environment benefits from a sustainable strategy. It also enhances social responsibility and will allow businesses to enjoy numerous advantages such as increasing revenue and cutting costs, increasing employee attraction and retention rates, creating a healthy workplace leading to greater productivity, and enhancing relationships with stakeholders and communities.”

At the workshop, there will be a presentation on the results of the Step To Sustainability project by a Portuguese SME, which participated in the pilot, as well as two panels of relevant industry representatives, who will explain best practices in the footwear sector. The first panel will focus on the manufacturing phase with presentations from El Naturalista and BATA Brands as well as the organisation LeatherNaturally; while the second will present the retailers’ approach to ensuring sustainability with contributions from Deichmann, Zumnorde, and Avocado Store GmbH.

More information on the workshop “Green Shoes for a Sustainable Life” at GDS on 28th July can be found below:

www.cec-footwearindustry.eu

Textination

