



INNOVATIVE DESIGN PRACTICES FOR ACHIEVING A NEW TEXTILE CIRCULAR SECTOR

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Design4circle e-Newsletter #1

Project identification

The project **Design4Circle** – *Innovative design practices for achieving a new textile circular sector* – was launched in December 2018 to create an innovative training curriculum to meet the needs of designers in the textile and fashion industry. The objective is to motivate designers from the textile sector to design products that will reduce their environmental impact during the product's life-cycle, while developing new and innovative business models within the principles of circular economy. In order to achieve such purpose, a Strategic Partnership under the Erasmus+ programme has put together 6 organisations from 6 different countries combining complementary expertise in the different fields of the proposed project: two Universities experts in textile design and technologies: **RTU**, Latvia and **TUIASI**, Romania; one company expert in circular economy and new business models: **ECORES**, Belgium; and three business associations and VET providers that support different sectors of the textile industry through a strong expertise in eco-design: **TTA-TC**, Macedonia, **AMUEBLA**, Spain and **CTCP**, Portugal.

In the initial phase of the project, 29 European companies from 7 countries have been interviewed to identify how their circular economy strategy was implemented. Company representatives were asked to analyze different skills and competencies necessary for the successful implementation of their circular business models. In parallel, 29 higher education institutes and training experts were interviewed to understand which skills and competences are emphasised in their circular economy related training programmes.

Upcoming Event:



22.11.2019 | Portugal, Porto
Third Technical Meeting – Design4Circle

Events

First Technical Meeting – On 18th of January 2019 the 1st Technical Meeting was held at the Institute of Design Technologies at Riga Technical University – Riga, Latvia – the Lead project partner

The project partners reviewed the whole project covering the project aims, objectives, activities, inputs and goals, paying attention to the cooperation framework – timetable, administrative issues and Erasmus+ Procedures. In addition, Standard Contractual procedures – Grant Agreement – Bilateral Agreements – Financial Regulations and Procedures were discussed among project partners. In the second part of the day, the host of the event organized a visit tour to the Institute of Design Technologies at Riga Technical University.

The second Technical Meeting was held in Brussels on 23th of May at the premises of ECORES , project partner and expert in circular economy and new business models.



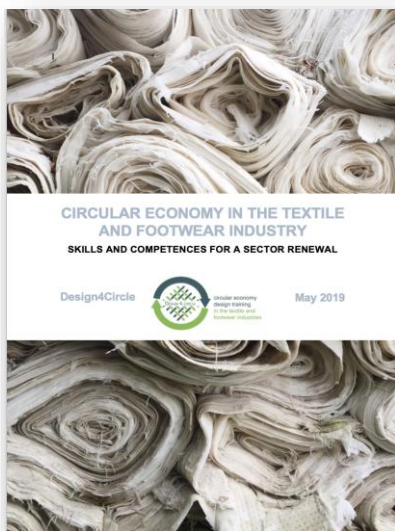
Institute of Design Technologies at Riga Technical University

Report

Circular economy in the textile and footwear industry

Assessing skills gap in implementing circular economy practices in the textile and footwear industry

Through companies interviews and HEI feedback, the report provides a better understanding of the skills set that need to be developed in order to develop an integrative training curriculum aimed at equipping designers in the industry with circular skills.



Key skills are organized taking a life cycle perspective:

- *Resources and materials skills*
- *Ecodesign skills*
- *Manufacture and end of life*
- *Retail and use*

Set of transversal skills:

- *Sustainability and environmental management*
- *Entrepreneurship*
- *User-centered skills and marketing*
- *Systems thinking and collaboration*



Best practice:

SC CottonTex SRL (Romania) is part of the TExmarket Company (Italy), a company which is specialized in the production of custom-made sportswear, owned by Widman family. In 2017, Michael Widman and Andreas Godman shared a vision: Sustainability in the shape of upcycling and fair production conditions. They created Airpaq company which produces trendy bag packs from airbags and old safety belts. These bag packs are sewn in Timisoara.



Airpaq Yellow



Airpaq Unicolor Yellow

Workshops

Skills and Competences for a Sector Renewal

Workshop presenting preliminary results on skillset for circular economy and pioneering business cases

Four workshops presenting preliminary results and pioneering business cases from the Design4Circle project were organized between 15th - 30th of June in Latvia, Romania, Portugal, Spain and North Macedonia.

The workshop in Latvia was organized by Riga Technical University and took place at the premises of the Institute of Design Technologies of Riga Technical University. In the workshop, 12 representatives from companies, manufacturers, consultancy, designers and HEI covering such areas as manufacturing of work wear, leisure clothing, upholstered furniture, designing and manufacturing of specialized sportswear, design for environment as well as HEI and consultancy for timber industry federation provided feedback on the report.



The workshop in Portugal was organized by Centro Tecnológico de Calçado de Portugal and took place at the premises of CTCP in Felgueiras, one of the most relevant location of the footwear industry. The 16 participants of the workshop, among which entrepreneurs and other representatives of footwear companies, manufacturers, consultants, designers and VET entities, covered all the footwear value chain, namely footwear production, soles and insoles production, design, marketing and sales, and one representative from textile sector.

The workshop in Romania was organized by TUIASI - Technical University of Iasi. 14 representatives (designers, managers and engineers) of clothing companies participated in this event. The companies are producing fashion clothes, personal protective garments, automotive covers and specialized sportswear (cycling).



Mario Gil – Klaveness - Comfort footwear manufacturer -Portugal

“...to create a platform for footwear where each company would be able to share their waste in order for other companies from other sectors to use them in a perspective of valorization”



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The workshop in Spain was organized by Amuebla and took place at the premises of the Technological Centre of Furniture and Wood's facilities in Yecla. The workshop was attended by 6 designers, 4 consultants and 2 VET teachers, all of them from the furniture sector and its related industries.



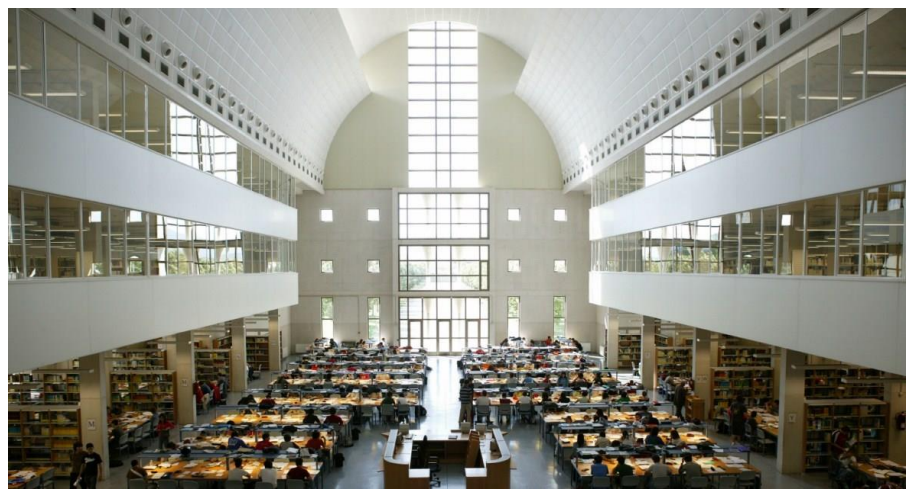
The workshop in North Macedonia was organized by Textile Trade Association - Textile Cluster and took place at premises of Economic Chamber of Commerce where TTA-TC is situated. The workshop was attended by 13 participants: companies, consultants, VET teachers, HEI teachers, Agency for employment and Center for adult education.

Generally speaking, the workshops allowed to highlight shared practices, pointed out worries about circular economy and provided insights on how to implement circular practices. Overall participants were aware of the issues discussed, and focused on solutions and contributions to improve the relevance of the curriculum. Participants agreed that the project consortium has an important and challenging job to do as they have to try to cover complex and diverse topics. The curriculum should not be as much a separate program or module in the study program for designers but it should become one of the instruments of design creation (design thinking) processes already at the early stages of research and idea development. Such a program / module could be scaled up (in a broader context), to address the entire design industry, with specialized modules related to specific industries (i.e. clothing / fashion).

Best practice:

NAE (No Animal Exploitation) is a Portuguese vegan footwear brand. It proposes a fair and animal-friendly alternative against human exploitation and supports the environment.

“Our strategy is to create modern products that are designed for everyday use. The products are manufactured only in certified factories in Portugal, where employees are respected and don't use any product from animal origin or that damages the environment”



Education

Campus Iberus is a consortium composed of four universities (Zaragoza, Lleida, L Rioja and Public University of Navarre) focusing on excellence in education. Campus Iberus is currently developing a joint master's degree on Circular Economy (90 ECTS credits) in order to benefit from the expertise of several research groups on the topic, previous educational on related matters (e.g., Sustainable Chemistry), as well as a growing interest from public and private institutions.