



**May 2025**

## **From Heritage to Innovation: METASKILLS4TCLF Builds Skills for Tomorrow's TCLF Industries**

On 6–7 May, partners from Belgium, Germany, France, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Spain, and Ukraine gathered in Pirmasens, Germany, a city renowned for its shoemaking heritage, to advance the Erasmus+ Blueprint *MetaSkills4TCLF* project. This EU co-funded initiative aims to develop specialised training programmes focused on the green and digital transition in the textiles, clothing, leather, and footwear (TCLF) industries, equipping individuals with knowledge to thrive in a changing industry.

Work is currently underway on learning content for 36 curricula focused on the circular economy and digital fashion. This innovative content will include e-books, immersive virtual reality (VR) experiences, and non-immersive 360° videos, ensuring accessibility for individuals without VR headsets. Filming of industrial sites across various countries is already in progress to support the development of these materials.

Following the initial survey conducted in April 2024, the *METASKILLS4TCLF* consortium launched a second annual survey to assess the evolution of skills needs of European companies and education providers. The 256 responses revealed strong concerns about an ageing workforce and the pressing need for generational renewal—43% of respondents rated the impact of the ageing workforce as high, and 21% as very high. Moreover, between 31% and 50% of employees are estimated to require advanced digital skills. Looking ahead, more than half of all jobs are expected to require new digital or green skills within the next five years. Youth engagement remains a key issue, with 39% of respondents stating that young people perceive careers in the sector negatively, and 34% viewing perceptions as neutral.

To foster collaboration and ensure a highly skilled workforce, project partners are establishing several networks. These include regional alliances such as TCLF Pacts for Skills, and European with a Network of TCLF education providers promoting excellence, and a Network of regional public authorities supporting the modernisation of TCLF education. Both digital and in-person workshops regularly take place to enable these networks to share best practices, collaborate, and learn from one another.

*METASKILLS4TCLF* will also contribute to the upcoming EU Textiles Ecosystem Platform, which will be officially launched on May 16th. The platform will provide stakeholders with easy access to essential information on EU policies, interactive workshops and webinars, networking opportunities, peer-learning experiences, and a space to connect with fellow industry actors.

In addition to planning future project activities, partners had the opportunity to visit the premises of PFI, the Test and Research Centre in Pirmasens, where chemical, physical, biotechnological, and microbiological investigations on footwear, leather, textiles, and other products and materials are carried out.

Discover how you can get involved in this project by following us on LinkedIn and Instagram or subscribe to our newsletter for the latest updates on our initiatives and progress. Join us in transforming skills for a sustainable and digital future in Europe's TCLF industries!