



## **Fighting misinformation and greenwashing in the footwear sector**

The Erasmus+ VETting Green project was recently launched to support the European Union efforts to put an end to Greenwashing on consumer products. The partnership, composed by footwear producers, vocational training providers and consumer representatives from 5 European countries (BE, GR, IT, PT and SP) aim at preparing footwear companies to tackle greenwashing with the necessary training tools and materials.

In line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the EU is implementing the Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP), a building block of the EU Green Deal, to become the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. Special attention is given to tackle misleading green claims that have during the last years while consumers demand for transparency and veracity. Europe has responded with two Directive proposals, the Directive on Consumer Empowerment for the Green Transition and the Directive on new rules for substantiating green claims, aimed at consumers and manufacturers respectively, both of them about to be approved.

The VETting Green project was conceived to support the implementation of these legislative proposals, by helping footwear managers, workers, and also consumers differentiate environmentally sustainable business practices from empty marketing strategies that constitute greenwashing. For this purpose, the project will generate new knowledge and Vocation Education Training (VET) courses on how to display and base substantiated claims and avoid greenwashing. Partners will develop attractive courses for VET students and professionals thanks to digital tools with a learner-centred approach, based on augmented reality modules, explanations, good practices, templates and quizzes with a gamification approach that will allow learners to interact more in the process, making learning more enjoyable and fun. In addition, the project will support policy makers and public authorities on the transition towards greener policies in the footwear and related sectors, while tackling unscrupulous practices that exploit consumers' willingness to protect the environment.

By the end of the project, VETting Green wishes to generate knowledge among current and future workers in the sector, as well as among consumers of footwear and other textile products, so to reach a common understanding of sustainable practices and concepts that improve transparency and avoid intentional or unintentional greenwashing by companies in the footwear sector and beyond. More than ever, it is crucial to combat misinformation and greenwashing, and to advocate greater corporate social and environmental responsibility, which could help reduce the sector's environmental impact and combat climate change.



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