



Editorial

Our European Sector Skills Council is celebrating its first anniversary in few days. We should be proud of the work done so far even if lot still has to be accomplished. This year proved partners that cooperation, exchange of idea and views is a fruitful

vehicle. More we will work together, more we will be able to enlarge our network and more the benefits will be tangible and attractive.

I believe we took the right decision to start our ESC journey, as education and training is at the heart of TCL companies' preoccupations. Our production models are in constant development and greater integration of innovations and technologies in our processes will occur and will be needed.

Today, more than ever, the need to adapt the offer to demand in terms of Vocational Education and Training (VET) is crucial for our competitiveness and the strengthening of the TCL sectors. The aim is to facilitate capillary diffusion among our SMEs of a number of innovations (process and products) that our sectors witnessed in the last years, while at the same time trying to solve the issues of mismatch in skills/competences needed, and to achieve this despite a problem of image and social consideration linked to the sectors' history.

But even if VET is considered as key for the EU economy future it has an insufficient appeal to the vast majority of youth. In the last decade we observed a large decrease in the number of

vocational students: a drop from 60% to 50% in upper secondary education throughout Europe (all vocations). This is probably the result of curricula that need to be urgently revised as the restructuring of our companies have changed the profile of skills needs.

Indeed in the last 2-3 decades a massive restructuring has heavily changed the face of the TCL value chain in Europe. The core moved from manufacturing to downstream/upstream activities therefore reducing, in relative terms, the place of manufacturing in the value chain – that remains key - while increasing the role of the positions linked to innovation (technical & design) and management (marketing, communication, management). It must be clear that this is not an exclusive evolution of the TCL as other manufacturing sectors faced the same societal change.

Nevertheless, the mismatch and the distortion against more technical skills and low skills levels, combined with our ageing workforce and the risk of losing technical know-how with retirement, explains the preoccupation, to say the least, of our entrepreneurs. The replacement rate is falling beyond what is needed and is /will not be sufficient to support the enormous effort in terms of innovation and product development our industry will have to face to maintain its leadership in number of market niches.

When looking at the best VET practices identified in the EU it become clear that these were developed in areas where specific competitive advantages and specializations are present as for instance: cultural creativity, R&D for technical textiles, manufacturing experience for product innovation, etc. As a consequence specialization (within the TCL industry) is a key factor for implementing effective training policies.

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With the above in mind, I see in the ESC - TCL the key role to initiate the movement to (a) overcome the "separation" between "education" and "enterprise"; (b) Improve

considerably the attractiveness of the TCL sectors' technical and operational jobs, especially for young people (replacement) and (c) to contextualize VET to the local situation with innovative solutions to solve local mismatches.

It is in this vision that the ESC – TCL has a key role to play through the mobilisation of knowledge and best practices, examples to be replicated through the network to maximize our impact.

Francesco Marchi

EURATEX Director General and Board member of the EU TCL SSC



Investment in Skills Heralds a New Dawn for the UK Fashion and Textiles Industries

In September 2012, the UK government announced over £2 million of support for a new programme to develop the next generation of skilled talent for the textiles industries in England. The partnership, led by a consortium of employers and the Textile Centre of Excellence, includes manufacturers from textiles, technical textiles, apparel and textile services sectors, trade associations and Creative Skillset.

In the first round of the Employer Ownership Skills Pilot initiative, government invited companies to design more effective ways to improve skills in the workforce to drive productivity and growth. Company leaders worked with sector bodies to create an ambitious and innovative new approach that will develop technical expertise and business acumen.

Paul Johnson, Managing Director of WT Johnson and Sons Cloth Finishers and Chair of the Creative Skillset Fashion & Textiles Skills Council said "The Government invited industry to take the lead in designing and delivering the skills training required for their businesses to compete more effectively. Our industry has heard and has responded to that challenge. We will create new partnerships with schools, introducing new pathways for ambitious young people to take up rewarding careers and enabling our

businesses to succeed in high value markets around the world".

"We are delighted to be strategic partners in this bid", Creative Skillset's chief executive, Dinah Caine, said. "We were very pleased to have supported its development and congratulate the industry and the Textile Centre of Excellence for their success. This project offers bold and innovative proposals. It will enable businesses of all sizes to attract and train bright new talent to drive growth and secure on-going international competitiveness in fashion and textiles, whose contribution is key to both the Creative Industries and Advanced Manufacturing."

The Textile Centre of Excellence Managing Director, Bill Macbeth welcomed the news: "This project will bring about a step change in the level and quality of training in the sector, demonstrating new models for public investment. Our project includes practical new ideas for working with education, attracting and preparing industry entrants, developing Apprenticeships and creating new opportunities for increasing technical knowledge".

Also in autumn 2012, Creative Skillset launched the UK's first ever Higher Apprenticeship in Fashion and Textiles. This



Apprenticeship, complementing the existing Advanced Apprenticeships in Fashion and Textiles, is a ground-breaking initiative that will enable Apprentices to develop essential skills for industry in two complementary pathways: Technical Textiles and Product Development and Sourcing. The Higher Apprenticeship in Fashion and Textiles: Technical was designed and developed by Creative Skillset and industry partners supported by investment from the National Apprenticeship Service.

The two initiatives, along with investment in capacity building for Group Training Associations, will help businesses, especially SMEs, rise to the skills challenges identified in

the Creative Industries Council's Skills Report. The report, endorsed by the Council and ministers in January 2012 and sets out a blueprint for action to drive jobs and growth through investment in skills.

Contacts: **Annie Warburton**, Head of Partnerships, anniew@creativeskillset.org & **Stephen Grey**, Research and Evaluation Manager, stepheng@creativeskillset.org

www.creativeskillset.org

Creative Skillset, Focus Point, 21 Caledonian Road, London, N1 9GB

Tel. 020 7713 9800

An interview with :



Françoise Sackrider
Retail and supply management / Permanent lecturer IFM



Q-Could you briefly describe your organisation, its role, specifically in the area of Education and Training?

IFM is a higher level establishment for teaching, executive education, and expertise for the textile, fashion, luxury and design industries.

It was founded in 1986 by professionals in the sector with support from the Ministry of Industry and remains under the Ministry's tutelage. IFM welcomes over 120 students and 2000 professionals each year. The IFM enables postgraduate students to follow high-level professionalizing programs in both management and design. Students then take their training in both dimensions to work in companies where creativity is a major source of added value or alternatively develop their own business. The end result is the breaking down of barriers between management and design in an industry that is about products, brands, culture and design.

IFM proposes education and training programs to students from France and abroad. The sectors are varied: clothes, leather goods, shoes,

jewellery, watch making, glasses, perfumes and cosmetics, design and interiors. The professions for which IFM prepares its students range from the design and conception of the product to its actual marketing, via retail management, brand management, communication.

IFM also provides high-level training for executives and managers in the fashion, luxury, perfume and cosmetics, design and lifestyle industries. Our programs aim to reinforce skills and knowledge to get to a deeper level of understanding of the issues at stake for the future of brands and companies.

Q-Could you detail your collaboration with the Industry in Education and Training and stress its value-added?

We maintain very close links with the industry. Businesses from the sector are very well represented in the governance of the Institute. A group of sponsor companies finance a grant system that guarantees the diversity of our recruitment policy. The funds collected are used to award grants to students, especially foreign

students who gain places on the Fashion, Design and Luxury Management Postgraduate Program, or in the Fashion and Accessory Design Postgraduate Program. Cercle IFM also finances grants for high school students and other students to take part in the Summer School.

The teaching also emphasizes the involvement of companies at all levels: the programs are designed according to the needs expressed by our professional partners. Major players from the sector and high level contributors come in to talk to the students throughout the year. Workshops are put together with input from companies to make real-life case studies.

Q-Could you briefly describe your Fashion, Design and Luxury Management Postgraduate Program?

The main sectors and professions where IFM's graduates work are: Fashion and luxury (not only focusing on Textile and Clothing), Perfumes and cosmetics as well as Design and lifestyle. The functions vary and from Product Marketing (product development and conception, building a collection), to Sales and distribution (managing points of sale and retail networks, purchasing, visual merchandising) and Brand concept and management (brand image and identity, communications, print and web content, journalism).. Student are selected on dossiers (high profile selection) and come from various backgrounds such as: business school, political science institutes, universities (law, management, economics, arts, human and social sciences, communications...), or specialist engineering schools, or schools of applied art, fashion, design, architecture, visual arts schools... In 2012, 86

students were following the postgraduate program All of them have in common a special attraction to fashion and creativity. 70% of them already have a 5-year graduate level degree and are 24-25 years old. 80% are women (same ratio than in the Fashion sector). 25% are coming from abroad (South America like Brazil, Unites-States, China, Korea, and from Europe Belgium United Kingdom and Italy). Within the first year after the end of the program, 85% of the students obtain an open-ended work contract.

Q-Tell us about the main strengths and areas for improvement regarding your Education and training activities:

On September 1st this year, the IFM's Fashion, Design and Luxury Postgraduate Program was awarded an official "visa" by the Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche for a six-year period. This "visa" recognizes the quality of the content of the training, the teaching and the teaching staff. Only establishments with this visa are entitled to give diplomas. Without it an establishment can only give certificates. The visa can be awarded for a period from one to six years. The IFM's Management course has the visa for the longest period possible.

Finally, IFM is currently working on an extension of its Management programs with the implementation of a Management program in English, as for the moment all the Management and Design programs are available in French only.

Editorial team

Francesco Marchi
Gustavo Gonzalez-Quijano
Luc Triangle

Production and Direction

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<http://www.euroleather.com/>

COTANCE - "Working for the
Leather Industry in Europe"
Rue Belliard 3
B-1040 Brussels
Belgium



<http://www.industrial-all-europe.eu>

IndustriAll European Trade
Union
Bd roi Albert II, 5
1210 Brussels,
Belgium



<http://www.euratex.eu>

EURATEX - European
Apparel and Textile
Confederation aisbl
24, rue Montoyer; Bte. 10
B-1000 Brussels
Belgium