



FashionTalk  
Attract Participation  
and Increase Learning Motivation  
of Young Adults

Country Reports Summaries

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Instituto Politécnico Beja

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## Situation Report for Austria

The majority of our clothing is produced in Asia, Latin America, Africa and Eastern Europe, because of cheaper labour force. During the manufacturing process, human and labour rights are often violated.

As part of the Grundtvig learning partnership "Fashion Talk", we want to highlight this aspect of the fashion industry and integrate it into the activities of the partnership. In this respect, the "country analysis" announced in the project application deals with a different focus in each partner country:

In Germany, the research focused on adult education outside the formal educational pathways, and particularly on offers with regard to culture and creative industries. The objective was to identify the interfaces between adult education and fashion and where specifically opportunities and options for young adults can be located.

The Italian partner showed how young people understand the concepts of fashion and design. It turned out that fashion is an important aspect of all social groups.

The Portuguese contribution consists of a collection of teaching and learning materials that are sent to pupils and students as future designers and decision makers in the fashion industry and make them aware of problematic aspects of this industry. Alternatives are shown to jointly develop new ways of fairly traded and organically produced trendy fashion.

In Austria, we decided to highlight our cooperation with the Fashion School Hetzendorf and the project "My Design. My responsibility", and to give an overview of materials prepared for specific aspects. They can be used in the classroom, but also in other training issues regarding social responsibility, using fashion and fashion products as an example that can be used for discussion. We are adding to these materials testimonies of young people about fashion, to show the social and cultural environment in which our partnership has been working.





## Situation Report for Germany

Methodologically, this report is based on internet supported desk research, project experiences and conference follow-ups.

Fashion plays an important social role, specifically for young grown-ups, who partially define themselves by fashion: This is demonstrated by membership to certain groups of friends or colleagues, to social groups or events and rituals. Any reactions of outsiders of these groups support the self esteem and contribute to the stability of these groups - or vice versa. Because the fashion market is dominated by fashion chains, especially individual fashion items are highly appreciated. Temporary trends are confronted with adaptations and contemporary interpretations of historic patterns, cuts and jewellery.

Formal further education measures – offered in private schools and so called Volkshochschulen (“adult education centres”) – are complemented by informal offers. In both cases the offers are not primarily targeting employment but are closely connected with personal creativity, traditional events or rituals.

However, it seems that as part of the rise of creative industries there are **developing new business fields which need high qualifications**. This report identified three working field for further education in fashion. None of them is economically and socially explored yet:

- **„Fashion with migrant background“ means fashion trends related to migrant societies. The respective fashion items already have a big business potential.**  
E.g. connected with the so called „Turkish wedding industries“ it can be shown, that fashion bridges the gap between tradition and present trends. Here, fashion production is organised in a way which allows the participation of all ages. A business potential is clearly visible. This seems to be an extraordinary chance for young people who can act in the framework of two cultures.
- **“Recycling fashion” means innovative re-use of cloth, fabrics, clothes and other fashion items which are created in a new context.**  
Recycling fashion can have a back ground in a general approach of treating natural resources with care. Here fashion gets social relevance as an expression against materials mainly produced for consumption and the waste bin.
- **In “smart fashion” communication technologies become integrated part of clothes and fashionable gadgets and foster life quality for those wearing them.** Electronic sensors and chips are processed in clothes in order to give information about or for the person who wears these clothes. This can be for health reasons as well as for leisure time activities

Specifically interesting in the working context of Association Culture & Work:

The development of business fields happens in all age groups. New, highly innovative and exciting labels are not specifically founded and started by young people only. E.g. women after their family time or at the end of their active business life seem to be quite active in this field. This seems to be a kind of signal that demographic change has reached fashion industries.

Considering this background, Fashion Talk has a unique chance, not only to target young people of different European countries for exchanging experiences in the field of fashion beyond the established education systems. The project also offers the chance to learn more about new possible business fields on the back ground of demographic change.

The integration of people with migrant background as well as demographic change will be important issues of European societies during the next years. In further education for fashion industries this does not play a role yet, but the relevance is clearly evident and can be targeted in Fashion Talk in a most productive way.



## Situation Report for Italy

During the last year, the wave of fashion growth quickly in all the west countries with advanced economies. Wearing goods, furniture, industrial products, technology, movies, theatre, costumes, songs, feminine models, etc. were taken up and down following this wave, destroying the market and disguising consumers. But what we can in reality find in this cultural foaming, this escalation of news, and is it so negative, apocalyptic this cultural liability that the fashion produces? Which kind of social class are active in this process and which suffers it? At the end, what is fashion?

To some of those questions the classical sociology gave some answers, but there are especially the more recent sociological contribution on consumption and are semiology that clarify how behind a frivolous frame the fashion phenomenon hide more complex and contradictorial processes of socialization and differentiation.

The fashion isn't part of the tradition, it has a recent history. The Italian word "moda" (fashion) appears for the first time in its actual meaning in the treatise "La Carrozza da Nolo" of the abate Agostino Lampugnani, published in 1645. But the born of the Italian fashion has the historical reference of the first high fashion show organized by the Marquise Gianbattista Giorgini in Florence. In just some decades Italy represents the country in which some of the best fashion designer became well known all around the world.

Italy because of this success, offers a great variety of training in the field of fashion and design.

Basically the training is divided into two levels. A high level, the academic and a second level, the professional/vocational. Apart from this formal level we can find non formal trainings organized for people with family, working or study troubles: short courses (40 – 60 hours), summer courses, etc.

About the academic offer we can say that most of the courses offered by the major Italian universities (Milano, Padova, Bologna, Venezia and Roma), foresee a close number of participants.

Students need to have the second level of qualification to be included in the list of selection and pass an admission test that evaluates general and specific knowledge of students.

The course can last 3 or 5 years depending on the level they would like to reach. About the vocational training possibility to access the fashion schools and courses it is compulsory to have a secondary school degree and ask for the admission to a vocational institution. This type of schools last from 3 to 5 years. The 1<sup>st</sup> three years give a professional qualification in fashion operator, adding the last 2 years the students can get a post qualification degree.

The training includes theory and practical experience. The non formal training is various. We can find summer or short courses (50-60 hours) from which students can get an attendance certificate by paying privately or being helped by the European Social Fund.

Cramars developed a research with the aim to explore our students' idea of fashion and design.

We collected 20 questionnaires that reveals that fashion in Italy is an important aspect at every social level. Fashion is a way of life to show the personality, creativity and fancy and for some students is an economic tool or social behaviour.

Generally all gave a positive vision of the world fashion and all of them own some gadgets considered trendy. The items are: clothes, cars and technological tools. Those tools last for no longer than a season, maximum one year. The results confirm that the importance of the fashion and to own some status symbol is disseminated at all social and age levels.



## Situation Report for Portugal

Given the importance of fashion in various fields – cultural, social, economical, anthropological, among others – and its presence in our daily life, we consider Fashion as a theme with great potential for young adults to develop their learning motivation, their competences and capabilities. With this report we intend to gather important information about Fashion teaching in Portugal, in order to know what are the courses, trainings and other learning initiatives available, related with Fashion, and what kind of learning approaches does this offer represents for students and trainees. This document is mainly based on internet research, followed by contacts with the institutions and projects responsible for the mentioned courses.

First, we listed the availability of Fashion related courses in different levels of the Portuguese educational/school system. Second, we looked for private training providers, offering training courses, not necessarily with a degree included, in some way related with Fashion. As a third perspective, we mention some projects that contribute for a non-formal learning context approaching Fashion.

Starting with the **high education** context, we make reference to the **Universities** with available courses in Fashion or related courses. Here, we find bachelors and master degrees in Fashion Design, Communication and marketing of Fashion, Branding, Textile and Clothing Design. Universities also provide other advanced short-term courses, such as Accessories Design, Fashion Management, Makeup for Fashion and Television, Clothing Modelling, among others. In what high education level is concerned, Fashion related courses can generally be defined by having a multidisciplinary approach, where students can decide to develop a more creative oriented career, associated with design, or a more technical profession, associated with industrial processes and management.

After universities, we present the **Vocational and Technical courses**, offered by different sorts of schools and training providers. These courses - which develop essentially a technical approach and prepare students to be technicians - represent the main strand of Fashion teaching courses available in Portugal. At this level, we must outline the important role of the technological centres for the textile industry, providing different trainings for diverse targets (unemployed, young people, adults' education and company groups) and working for the specialization of the sector developing very specific courses and contents. From Textile Production, to Window Dressing, Industrial Sewing, Clothes Design Techniques, Hat Design or Fashion Illustration, in the professional and technical learning context, the offer is very diversified.

We could also find a few Fashion related courses oriented for **Technological Specialisation and Adult Training and Education** programmes, as we took in consideration the specific fields of Shoes and Jewellery respectively (Shoe Design and Modelling, and Jewellery Technician).

In what **training courses** are concerned, the offer does not occur in a regular basis and there are not many fashion related ones. Nevertheless, we make reference to an Ecodesign Clothing Recycling course, currently provided by a centre for handcrafts, as well as some occupational courses on Jewellery techniques, provided by specialized private schools.



## Young people, fashion and communication situation

On the **non-formal learning context**, we chose three individual projects considered as relevant, approaching Fashion through crafts, production of textile pieces and accessories, as well as the recovery of ancient textile techniques. These projects have been developing various workshops such as making clothes and accessories, knitting and crocheting, sewing, spinning and other activities. These are interesting projects since they gather around diverse aged people with different educations and experiences, working as a place for exchanging experiences, discovering vocations and motivating people to learn new things.

With this overview of the Fashion teaching and initiatives in Portugal, we try to show that Fashion is actually a theme where many perspectives and specificities can be outlined and developed and in this sense, it offers a large range of possibilities to young people and also adults improve their learning motivation as well as discover and interest themselves for new skills.