



Final Conference

1st December 2020

Presentation of the Speakers and  
Panellists

### Welcoming words

**Andreas Kindermann** has been the CEO of Austria-based tannery Wolsdorff Leather since 2008. The company also owns plants in Croatia, China and Mexico. It was awarded the Tannery of the Year Award in 2014, the Award for best water treatment plan in Austria in 2014, a CO2 footprint award and has been a CO2 neutral factory in Austria since 2016.

He was elected President of COTANCE in 2018 and reelected in 2020.

Holder of a Vienna university degree in Computer Science and Economics, Mr Kindermann also worked 16 years in Automotive TIER 1, a North-American based automotive top 10 supplier.



**Judith Kirton-Darling** is Deputy General Secretary of industriAll Europe, representing manufacturing, mining and energy workers from 38 European countries. She was formerly a Labour Member of the European Parliament for the North East of England (2014-20). Before entering parliament, she was active for 15 years within the Labour and trade union movement, notably she was elected Confederal Secretary at the European Trade Union Confederation in 2011



### Presentation of the Social and Environmental Report

**Maurizia Contu** has a degree in Political Economics from Bocconi University and has been part of the UNIC Economic Department since 2003.

She develops market analysis on the sector and the reference supply chain, to support associate companies and internal activities, she is responsible for sectorial projects of an economic nature at international level and deals with institutional relations at national and European level.

The main reference themes for her activity are sustainability issues, and specifically traceability and animal welfare, authenticity and Made In, customs and trade agreements.



**Brigitte Mercier** has been in charge with the management of social relations, training and legal advice to members in the French Federation of Tanners (Fédération Française de la Tannerie-Mégisserie) for the last 5 years. She graduated in social law.



**Xavier Marginet Ribera** is Leather and Environment Technology Advisor. He obtained a Eng/Bachelors degree in Industrial Chemistry at the University of Barcelona in 1985. He went on to work as laboratory manager, technical director and product manager of leather chemical auxiliaries at Hispano Quimica, S.A. In 1999 he became the commercial director of La Forestal Tanica/Lapi Group, in the leather chemical auxiliaries market. From 1999 until 2007 he worked as the director of AIICA, the Spanish leather research centre, and from 2008 as the director of the ACTec, Catalan Association of Technological Centres. For 15 years he has been a member of the board of AQEIC, with representation commitments for Spain in the IUE Committee of IULTCS for 5 years. For 2 years, he was appointed as Convenor of CEN TC289/WG1, and Chairman of the IUC Committee, From 2007 to date, he has acted as R&D advisor in Leather and Valorisation. Collaboration in cooperative projects in EU environment and Tech Transfer to North Africa and Latin America.



## **Panel “Challenges and Opportunities of the Green Deal in the Textile-Clothing-Leather-Footwear Industries”**

**Carmen Arias** is the Secretary General of the European Footwear Confederation (CEC) since 2012, where she works in a broad range of European policy issues and projects to support the sector in anticipating challenges and grasping opportunities in order to enhance its competitiveness and growth. Her professional experience includes other positions in the private (as consultant in multinationals, Ernst & Young and Deloitte) as well as public sectors, at European and regional level (nine years at the European Commission and seven at the Valencian Regional Government Office in Brussels). She holds a BA in Law and a MA in Company Tax Law from the IE Business School in Madrid.



**Anna Athanasopoulou** is Head of Tourism, Textiles and Creative Industries at the European Commission. Working for the EU institutions since 2002, Anna has held diverse posts relating to culture, creative industries, and external relations in Brussels and Geneva. Before joining the EU civil service, Anna worked as Adviser to Ministers of Culture in Greece and Director of Programme Planning for the Athens 2004 Cultural Olympiad. In parallel, she lectured on History of Art and Cultural Management. Anna holds a B.A in Archaeology and followed postgraduate studies in History of Art in USA (Master of Arts, George Washington University) and the UK (Ph.D, Courtauld Institute of Art).



**Michael Costello** is Director of ESG (Environment, Social & Governance) at Stahl. Michael's focus is implementing Stahl's strategy of promoting transparency and progressively reducing the social & environmental footprint of the supply chain by stimulating cooperation between its stakeholders. He presents the company's ESG case to customers, brands, industry associations, NGO's and universities. Michael is also member of the Executive Committee of the Leather Working Group, which focusses on environmental stewardship, and is active in raising awareness about chemical compliance initiatives like the ZDHC Roadmap to Zero. Michael has a broad experience in the chemical industry in a variety of positions. In 1988, he joined Stahl USA as a process chemist and subsequently occupied commercial and management positions in the inks & coatings industry, in different companies, before becoming Stahl's Director of Sustainability in 2015. Michael holds a BSc in Chemistry from The University College, Dublin, Ireland, and an MBA from the University of Massachusetts, Boston.



**Gerald Kreuzer** has been working for PRO-GE, the Austrian Manufacturing Workers Union from 2007 to date. He specialises in industries and collective bargaining policy (textile, paper and mechanical engineering industry).

He has a history of working in the civic & social organization industry, with experience in Non-profit Organizations, Politics, Policy Analysis, Textile Industry, and Analytical Skills. Gerald Kreuzer graduated in Labour Law, Economy and Participation from SOZAK – Social Academy.



**Dr Kerry Senior** took over as director of the UK Leather Federation, the trade association for the UK leather industry, in January of 2013. He is responsible for the strategic governance of the organisation and ensuring its continued success in representing, promoting and protecting the UK leather industry. He is also secretary of the International Council of Tanners, the global body representing producers of leather.

His previous work experience includes ten years with Eurofins BLC Leather Technology Centre, working on UK & EU funded research projects addressing environmental and raw material issues facing the leather industry, and dealing with technical and policy aspects of Environmental Legislation. His PhD is in Microbiology and was awarded by the University of Kent



**Dirk Vantghem** is the Director General of EURATEX, the European Textile Association.

Dirk joined EURATEX as a Director General in September 2019. His mandate is to move the organisation forward and to promote a competitive, sustainable and innovative European Textiles and Clothing industry. Prior to EURATEX, Dirk worked for EUROCHAMBRES, the European Chamber of Commerce lobby, as a Director of Operations and previously Director of International Trade. Dirk has an economic background and holds a Master's degree from the College of Europe, Bruges.

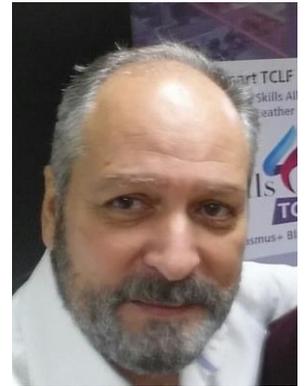


## Moderators

**Patrizia Pitronaci**, born in Rome, has been working in the international trade union sector for about twenty-five years, first as head of the Metalworker sector of the Uilm/Uil category and now as head of the Textile, chemical and energy sector of the Uiltec/Uil category. Expert in European Directives, she has held many training courses for young Italian trade union delegates who are approaching European and Global trade union realities for their first time, explaining the differences between European and Global bargaining systems. She currently works at IndustriAll European Union as Policy Advisor.



**Gustavo Gonzalez-Quijano** is the Secretary General of COTANCE and has worked for the European leather industry for over 30 years. He has been called as an expert by various UN organisations with departments relevant to the leather sector such as UNIDO, FAO, UNCTAD/ITC. He is also Chairman of CEN/TC 289 in charge of Standardisation in the leather industry.



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