

## Katty Fashion CASE STUDY

**Country**  
Romania

**City / Region**  
Iasi

**No. of Employees**  
+ 50

### Description of the organisation

A traditional yet innovative player in the Romanian textile fashion sector, Katty Fashion is an SME with over 50 employees working to innovate their business model and transition to digital delivery and circular economy.

### Workplace Innovation practices implemented

#### The Challenge

SMEs in the fashion industry are the backbone of Romania's economy, providing a potential source for jobs and economic growth, but challenged by workforce availability and low engagement.

The company is committed to providing bespoke and customized services based on a flexible production model, to ensure a steady customer base. This comes, in turn, with high pressure on just-in-time delivery and high output customization, which demands a more flexible and cross-competence workforce. The current way of working, based on team leaders and hierarchical command and control, doesn't foster the needed flexible working environment. Knowledge sharing is limited at the leadership level and the employee base lacks the skills and tools to actively contribute and work without close supervision.

Decisions are made in hierarchical chains, which adds pressure and low reaction speed to a changing environment. There have been identified several cases of reaction delays and decision bottlenecks that might lead to missed development opportunities. Also, the high-pressure working environment focused on output production leaves little room for experimentation and best practices sharing at the employee level, which leads to low team cohesion. This translates into low engagement levels that have never been measured other than in informal discussions, and to issues in finding and retaining qualified personnel.

The fashion industry sector is one of the biggest employers in the region, in terms of employee number, but the traditional way of working described above is consistently found all over the sector. This affects the competitiveness and long-term sustainability of these companies, also creating a rapid scaling opportunity.

#### The Solution

SustainAgile project is an employee-designed, bottom-up, initiative. Employees co-designed, in a virtual Co-creation lab, new forms of collaborations aiming at creating sustainable practices and fostering initiative and autonomy in the specific sector, developing new or improving existing measures to boost competencies development, redesigning job roles through introducing Agile leadership practices and tools. What we actually did? We used online platforms (Mural and Zoom) to learn about, develop, adapt, and finally implement several Agile HR practices:

- Personal Maps that help our people know each other better, to be integrated in the onboarding process.



- Personal and Team Kanban boards to be used in managing vital projects for the team.
- A Kudo wall that will enable us to say thank you for the work well done and for the learning opportunity for jobs not so well done.
- An onboarding canvas to be used for introducing new employees in the teams.
- Redefined job roles co-created together with the employees, with several dimensions added to the functional role (contribution to the team, contribution to the organization, contribution to innovative ideas and work towards personal development).

The main project objective was to design and implement a bottom-up new way of working, based on an Agile mindset, and create a best practices collection of tools, meetings, workshops, and webinars that will be used later to scale the approach to other fashion industry companies in the region.

### Main Achievements

- We managed to redesign several job roles vital for our company and team development.
- We improved our collaboration and digital skills by integrating virtual platforms in our daily work, which was good practice for business continuity in the Covid period.
- We showed that you can innovate the traditional textile industry workplace and work with Agile HR principles and practices daily.
- We improved people's engagement and alignment to individual and company objectives.

