

Media Release

Künzli invests into the future and reassembles manufacturing in Albania

Künzli, the Swiss shoe firm rich in tradition, concentrates its manufacturing competence in a modern production site. The recently founded subsidiary company *Künzli factory* in Albania joins the sewing process that was outsourced 25 years ago with the shoe assembly. This structural adjustment leads to a cut of six jobs in the production and dispatch center in Argovian Windisch. Künzli will support the employees concerned for their new career orientation.

Development and prototype creation, marketing, distribution as well as the administration remain at the headquarters in Switzerland.

Windisch, 30 April 2018 Since its origin in 1929 Künzli has maintained its production site in Switzerland. Changing customer demands, faster techniques of production and sale, and growing price pressure now call for an adjustment of the processes.

Over the last 90 years Künzli has continually developed. Since the 1970's the price erosion of sports shoes produced in Asia has led to a shift away from the original sports business. The transition to the niche market of orthopaedic stability boots was successful. The launching of noble sneakers in 2005 as the heritage of the proud sports shoes has become a second successful niche for premium products.

„The future asks for more“, says Barbara Artmann, owner and CEO of Künzli. „This is especially true for Künzli as a Swiss firm. High quality at stable prices calls for new technologies and modern processes in production and distribution. For Künzli, a flexible and cost-efficient production is mandatory to be able to fulfill the demands of the market and to make the necessary investments“.

Completely independent chain of production for premium quality

Künzli produces approx. 80 models in about 20 sizes. Each year about 20 model-variations and 10 completely new developments are launched. The customers expect the permanent availability of all models in all sizes.



In the 1990's Künzli's sewing was outsourced abroad because of cost. Problems of quality and reliability of the external partners were a continual risk factor. Maintaining a competent work force in the shoe assembling became more challenging, apprentice training was abandoned and the access to the know-how became more difficult. „From now on we will do it on our own“, was the conclusion of the Künzli team.

Investments into the future

An independent and modern production is decisive for Künzli's success. The integrated production in a new plant in Albania increases a consistent quality of the product and makes fast and flexible adjustments possible. *Künzli factory Sh.p.k.*, a subsidiary company of Künzli SwissSchuh AG, is ready for the future. The new machines in the sewing department are especially configured for the requirements of the Künzli products. Alred Ludi, the manager of *Künzli factory*, has wide experience in the shoe industry. He will be enlarging his team to up to 20 experienced employees by July 2018.

„We have been learning a lot from the Albanian shoe industry“, says Barbara Artmann. The outsourcing of a lot of Italian shoe firms has led to a high quality standard in Albania. Künzli has received valuable assistance while building up its new production plant. Big Albanian shoe firms have unselfishly given their advice. Künzli is already known amongst its peers and the small, friendly Swiss firm – the first non-italian firm to start its own production in Albania – is being helped. By the way Künzli really wanted to remain in Europe.

Original and of high quality – „Swiss-engineered“

Künzli will continue to develop, produce and distribute innovative solutions, creations, and shoes for the lines medicine (Künzli Ortho, Künzli Protect) und fashion (Künzli K style).

With its own integrated production in Albania, Künzli has created a solid basis for its healthy economic future and for the necessary innovations and investments.

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You will find more innovation on Künzli on: www.kuenzli-schuhe.ch

High-resolution photos and texts in English, German, and French on: www.kuenzli-schuhe.ch/medien/Pressevorlagen

