LVMH wants to hire 2,000 people in Italy in next three years

By Dominique Muret - 23 November 2021

Italy is increasingly a strategic platform for the LVMH group’s manufacturing operations, and especially for its fashion and leather goods division. Toni Belloni, the LVMH group’s managing director, underlined this to FashionNetwork.com on Friday in Florence, on the occasion of the ‘Show Me’ event dedicated to the group’s fine craftsmanship professions, stating that “all the shoes for our labels are made in Italy, as well as a large part of our ready-to-wear [collections] and all handbags, except those by Louis Vuitton.”

The world’s number one luxury group invests €100 million annually in Italy, where it employs 12,000 people, among them 6,000 artisans, with its seven labels, 30 production sites and 246 stores, while also providing jobs for another 100,000 workers through 5,000 suppliers and sub-contractors. LVMH has announced it wants to hire 2,000 artisans and other craft specialists in Italy within the next three years. At group level, LVMH intends to hire 8,000 people “in these pathways to the future” in 2022, and over 30,000 by the end of 2024.

While LVMH continues to grow, meeting rising demand for its products and boosting its production capacity, it is also facing a dramatic shortage of skilled labour. In France, 10,000 artisanal job openings are unfilled every year. In Italy, the gap is even greater. According to estimates by Altagamma, the association of Italian luxury brands, “there will be a shortfall of 270,000 people in exceptional métiers d’excellence, including 46,000 unfilled job openings in the fashion and leather goods sectors.”

Chantal Gaemperle, executive vice-president human resources and synergies at LVMH, emphasised that “there will be a shortfall of nearly 50,000 workers in these professions in Italy, in a key sector like fashion. In just a few years, which effectively means tomorrow. We will make 2,000 jobs available, there is a year full of opportunities at stake.” Gaemperle especially advocated “promoting and valuing” these professions. Hence the urgency in training new artisans at an even faster clip, and handing over to them the unique types of expertise that are crucial for this industry. Indeed, LVMH has opened 12 new schools in Italy, which train 2,000 people per year.
industry and the French luxury giant. There are more than 280 skilled professions active within LVMH alone.

But young people need to be encouraged to train in these professions, the majority of which involve manual labour. Not so easy in our virtual, high-tech era. This year, LVMH has introduced in France a programme called ‘Excellent’, which has also been trialled in Italy, to raise awareness with young students aged 12-14 and prompt them to change their opinion on these professions.

The ‘Show Me’ event is another way of publicising these professions. As in Paris last month, the event, held at the sumptuous Odeon theatre in Florence, showcased some of the LVMH labels' unique artisanal skills by means of stands and also by narrating the exciting experiences enjoyed by students of LVMH’s Institut des Métiers d’Excellence (IME, a vocational training institute) and by some of the group's senior executives, shared with an audience of 200 guests.

After founding IME in 2014, LVMH considerably boosted it in 2017 by opening a subsidiary in Italy, which started out with two training programmes and now offers 10, and has grown from a class of 27 students to 80 new apprentices this year. Other programmes have since been activated in Spain and Switzerland, and recently also in Germany and Japan, dedicated to the customer experience, in partnership with Rimowa.

Altogether, 1,400 apprentices have studied at IME since its inception, plus the 339 new ones in this year's cohort. Also, 18 LVMH labels have set up internal academies, and every year they train 3,000 people worldwide. In parallel, the group has created an academy for its métiers d'excellence offering further education, and ‘Les Virtuoses’, a programme that stimulates the group's home-grown talents, recognising the most distinguished in their craft. The programme's first edition has identified 67 of them, of whom 17 in Italy.

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