



European  
Commission

# EUROPEAN VOCATIONAL SKILLS WEEK



**2018** | Media relations toolkit

**#DiscoverYourTalent**

Employment,  
Social Affairs  
and Inclusion

---

## About the Media relations toolkit

If you are a stakeholder and partner of the European Vocational Skills Week and would like to promote your events, this toolkit is for you. This toolkit guides you through the various media channels you can use to raise awareness of the European Vocational Skills Week and the benefits of Vocational Education and Training (VET) across Europe.

This toolkit provides:

- Tips and advice on approaching the media and how to make your story stand out;
- A press release template for you to adapt and send;
- Sources of facts and figures;
- Tips on conducting media interviews.

## Why tell the media about your involvement in the European Vocational Skills Week?

The first two European Vocational Skills Weeks were successful, and the European Commission is organising the third European Vocational Skills Week to raise awareness of Vocational Education and Training (VET). The official Week in Vienna will take place from 5-9 November 2018 and hundreds of VET-related events will be organised across Europe from September to December 2018.

The Week and its corresponding communications campaign brings together education and training providers, civil society organisations, public authorities, business organisations and the broader public to raise the profile of VET across Europe. The Week aims to showcase the many opportunities that VET can provide for young people and adults, and the value that VET provides for the economy and the future of work and skills.

You can use media coverage to promote your event and show how it fits into the European Vocational Skills Week. This will help to make more people are aware that your event is taking place and motivate them to attend. Media coverage can also help to raise the profile of your organisation beyond your existing networks and to spread the message of the event and the Week out far and wide. This will help to raise awareness and shift the perception of Vocational Education and Training in your country.

The types of media that might be interested in the European Vocational Skills Week:

- **Local newspapers, websites and blogs** can be approached in the lead-up to your event or activity to encourage people to attend. A press release around two weeks before the event, plus a reminder a few days before is a good approach here. You can also telephone any media centres that you would like to cover your event, to help draw attention to your event/activity The publication or channel may decide to do a pre-event story or they may prefer to attend on the day and write up a story based on this.
- **Event listings** are a great way of encouraging people to come to your event. People are often keen to hear about local events that are taking place. Each listing has its own requirements, therefore, you will need to do some research here into how best to submit your event.
- **National newspapers** may be interested to hear about the Week and all of the events taking place. Providing facts and figures that are relevant to a general

audience, quotes and interesting interview opportunities can help to grab the interest of these publications.

- **Specialist publications** may also be interested to hear about the Week. You should approach these as early as possible as their editorial calendars may fill up in advance. The information you provide to these publications can be more technical. Providing access to an interesting expert or testimonial will help encourage coverage.
- **Radio and TV** may be interested, particularly for the more lively and unusual events taking place that will provide a good backdrop for filming and recording.

## Media relations

Here is a simple checklist that you can follow in order to gain coverage for your event and the European Vocational Skills Week. This is followed by more in-depth tips and advice:

### Media relations – checklist

- ✓ Decide which media you would like to approach
- ✓ Adapt the template press release with information about your event
- ✓ Add in any European country or region-specific information that you think is relevant
- ✓ Collect photos, quotes, infographics that can be published
- ✓ Think about who can be offered for interviews
- ✓ Email the press release and photos to media contacts
- ✓ Follow-up with a phone call to key media
- ✓ Include your name and contact details so that you can answer queries
- ✓ Be there to welcome journalists on the day and to introduce them to interesting people

## WHICH MEDIA TO APPROACH?

The first step is to identify which media covers your local or regional area. You can then find out the contact details of the journalists who cover local events, employment and education issues, social policy or European affairs either by looking at their website or ringing the media offices. You can also look at how to submit your event into their event listings.

A good contact list is the first step for successful media coverage. Getting your event into event listings will also give you more visibility.

### Prepare a press release

The best way to provide information to the media is by sending a press release. We advise you to use the European Vocational Skills Week press release template available on [the website](#). Choose your country's template and then simply fill in the information about your event and any region specific information that you think is relevant.

### When to send the press release

As pointed out before, for local media and daily newspapers you can send the press release to the relevant journalists around two weeks before the event. It is a good idea to also send a reminder a day or two before the event. For specialist publications and magazines you can

send the press release earlier as their editorial calendar may get booked up in advance. You can also submit your event to event listings up to a month in advance, depending on the set up of each listing.

#### Tips on completing the press release

- ✓ Put the really important information first. Always try to answer what, who, when, where and why
- ✓ Use short sentences and dynamic language
- ✓ Avoid too specialist language, and explain abbreviations
- ✓ Remember to include quotes and figures
- ✓ Send a photo that the journalists can use (don't forget that you have to have the necessary permissions)
- ✓ Include your contact details for enquiries

#### Follow-up calls

Journalists receive many press releases every day, therefore, a phone call can help to draw their attention to your press release and gives you the opportunity to sell-in your story. You can also find out from them if they have any special requirements.

## BRINGING YOUR PRESS RELEASE TO LIFE

The aim of your press release is to provide journalists with relevant and newsworthy information plus any additional material that they can publish such as photos, quotes, infographics, facts and figures.

- **Photos:** These can be photos taken at your event or you can use photos that you have on archive, if you are sending your press release before your event. Be sure to get all the necessary photo permissions before you send these to the journalists.
- **Quotes:** It is a good idea to include a quote in your press release. This can be from speakers at your event, experts from your organisation or testimonials from learners.
- **Facts and figures on VET:** These can be regional or country-specific or EU-wide.

## ADVICE ON SOURCING FACTS AND FIGURES

Your organisation may well have access to interesting and relevant facts and figures. Alternatively, here are some European sources of country-specific facts and figures that you might find helpful. Remember to always quote the source:

- [Education and Training Monitor 2017 – 28 country reports](#) (DG EAC)
- [VET-in-Europe country reports](#) (Cedefop)
- [TVET Database – country profiles](#) (UNEVOC, International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training, UNESCO)
- [\(UOE\) Education database](#) (UNESCO/OECD/EUROSTAT)
- [Vocational Education and Training Statistics](#) (EUROSTAT)

You can also check the national VET agencies, the ministry/department for education or labour in your country, as it is likely they have national reports on vocational education and training.

EUROSTAT is a good source of statistics, at European and national level for example:

- 49% of upper secondary students in Europe participate in upper secondary VET (2016).
- The employment rate of recent VET graduates<sup>1</sup> in Europe is 74.8% (2017).
- The percentage of low-qualified adults<sup>2</sup> in Europe is 22.5% (2017).
- 72.2% of companies in the EU provided continuing vocational training to their employees (2015).
- 10.9% of Europe's population participates in adult learning (2017).

## RELATIONSHIPS WITH JOURNALISTS

Building a good relationship with journalists helps to get coverage. You can phone them up and invite them to cover your event in addition to sending the press release. Make sure you ask about any specific requirements, they have and that you send them a reminder some days before the event. Once the day arrives, have a designated person to welcome them and make sure they have all the information they need. It may be a good idea to print out some copies of the Leaflet on the European Vocational Skills Week to hand out. The leaflet can be found on the website.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEWS

Interviews can be conducted face-to-face at the event, over the phone or by email. In the event of an interview request, there are some basic tips to bear in mind:

- Provide the journalist with some background information on your organisation and the European Vocational Skills Week. Information about the Week, its background and themes for 2018 can be found on the European Vocational Skills Week website;
- Decide in advance what you want to say. You can make a few notes that will help you during the interview;
- Focus on the key messages you want to provide and present your main points first;
- Be concise and use examples and personal stories to make the story stand out;
- Leave your contact details just in case the reporter needs to double-check some information;
- You may want to arrange the interview with someone else, such as a speaker at your event or someone who can give a testimonial. In that case, decide who would be the best person to be interviewed. Check with them that they are happy to be contacted by the press, brief them on what to talk about and the Week's key messages. Arrange a time for the journalist to call or meet up.

## Tools for you to use

You can use the European Vocational Skills Week press release template available on [the website](#) to promote your event. You can find a general template in English and in your national language. To use the template, you will simply need to fill in the specific information related to your activity and add any local information you think is relevant. Most media organisations prefer receiving press releases in the body text of an email, rather than as an attachment, so copy and paste the press release into an email before sending it.

---

<sup>1</sup> Aged 15-34, [Eurostat](#)

<sup>2</sup> Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education, [Eurostat](#)

---

## Frequently asked questions

### How can I make my story more attractive to the media?

Bear in mind that journalists like real life stories. Including personal stories, quotes and figures will make your press release stand out.

### Does the European Commission provide media contact details?

No - since the Week and its corresponding campaign is taking place across the 28 Member States, EEA and candidate countries, this is not possible. However, this toolkit provides advice on creating a good media database and tips on how to build a strong relationship with journalists.

### I have some further questions, who could I contact?

You can email us here on [info@vocationalskillsweek.eu](mailto:info@vocationalskillsweek.eu) or give us a call +44 (0)207 444 4264. Alternatively, you can contact us on social media, via the accounts below.

## Contact us

We are happy to help with any queries you may have about your media relations activities.

**Email:** [info@vocationalskillsweek.eu](mailto:info@vocationalskillsweek.eu)

**Phone:** +44 (0)207 444 4264

**Twitter:** @EU\_social @EuropeanYouthEU #EUVocationalSkills #DiscoverYourTalent

**Facebook:** @socialeurope, @EuropeanYouthEU