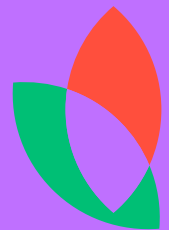


European
Commission

2020 Media Relations Toolkit

EUROPEAN **VOCATIONAL
SKILLS WEEK** 2020



#DiscoverYourTalent

Employment
Social Affairs
and Inclusion



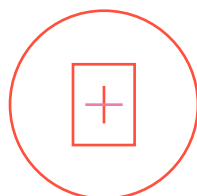
ABOUT THE MEDIA RELATIONS TOOLKIT

If you are interested in being a part of European Vocational Skills Week 2020 and would like to promote your events and activities through the media, this toolkit is for you. It guides you through the various media channels you can use to raise awareness of the Week and the benefits of vocational education and training (VET) across Europe.

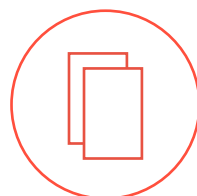
This toolkit provides:



ADVICE ON
APPROACHING THE
MEDIA AND HOW
TO MAKE YOUR
STORY STAND OUT



GUIDANCE ON
HOW TO PREPARE
A PRESS RELEASE
AND A TEMPLATE
TO ADAPT AND
SEND



SOURCES FOR
FACTS AND
FIGURES



TIPS ON
CONDUCTING
MEDIA
INTERVIEWS

For **key messages** about the European Vocational Skills Week campaign, please see the Key Messages document in the [resources section](#) on the website.

Following the great success of the first four European Vocational Skills Weeks, the European Commission is now organising the fifth Week to continue raising awareness of VET. The fifth edition of the Week is a hybrid event due to COVID-19 safety measures. It will take place from 9 to 13 November 2020 in Berlin and simultaneously online. Berlin has been chosen because Germany has the Presidency of the EU in the second half of this year. In addition, hundreds of VET-related events and activities associated with the Week will be organised across Europe throughout the year.



WHAT IS EUROPEAN VOCATIONAL SKILLS WEEK?

The Week and the accompanying communication campaign bring together learners, education and training providers, civil society organisations, public authorities, business organisations and the broader public to raise the profile of VET across Europe. The motto of the campaign is **Discover Your Talent!** The Week aims to showcase the many opportunities VET can provide for young people and adults, and the value VET brings to the economy and the future of work and skills. This year's theme is **VET for Green and Digital Transitions** in line with the European Commission's priorities on a European Green Deal and a Europe fit for the digital age.

The coronavirus pandemic has seriously disrupted all forms of education and training. This is an opportunity to take a fresh approach to VET, making it more modern, attractive, flexible and fit for the digital age and green transition. On 1 July 2020, the Commission put forward an ambitious agenda to guide COVID-19 recovery efforts in employment and social policy, with the focus on skills and VET. Its Communication on a European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience proposes 12 EU actions to support partnerships for skills, up- and reskilling and empowering lifelong learning. Its Recommendation on VET seeks to ensure that VET equips the workforce with the skills to support the recovery, as well as the green and digital transitions. Learn more about all the initiatives [here](#)



WHY TELL THE MEDIA ABOUT YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN EUROPEAN VOCATIONAL SKILLS WEEK?

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, this year you may want to organise a digital rather than a physical event/activity – it could be a webinar, digital press campaign, online careers fair, Facebook Live, Instagram Live or another online gathering. Whatever format you choose, media coverage will promote your event/activity and show how it fits into the Week. This will make more people aware of your event/activity and motivate them to take part. Media coverage can also raise the profile of your organisation beyond your existing networks, and spread the message of the event/activity and the Week far and wide. This will help to raise awareness of VET and improve its image.



WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN THE WEEK AND IN MY EVENT/ACTIVITY?

The types of media that might be interested in the Week include:



Local newspapers

These can be approached in the lead-up to your event/activity to encourage people to attend. A press release around two weeks before the event/activity, plus a reminder a few days before, is a good approach. Do not be discouraged if you've received few, if any, replies. Reporters are often simply too busy to respond to the numerous emails they receive each day. That is why it's important to send a follow-up message three or four business days after the initial outreach. You can also phone local newspapers you would like to write about your event/activity, to help attract attention.



Event/activity listings

Local event/activity guides or lists are a great way of encouraging people to participate in your event/activity, as people are often keen to hear about events/activities in their area. Each website or publication has its own requirements so you will need to do some research to find listings in your area and how to submit your event/activity.



WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN THE WEEK AND IN MY EVENT/ACTIVITY?



National newspapers

National newspapers may be interested to hear about the Week and the activities taking place. Providing facts and figures that are relevant to a general audience, quotes and interview opportunities can help to attract their interest. Send a press release and a follow-up email as with local newspapers.



Specialist 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 can be more technical. Providing access to an expert or a testimonial from someone who has benefited from quality VET will encourage coverage.



MEDIA RELATIONS

Here is a simple checklist you can follow to generate coverage. This is followed by more in-depth advice.




Decide which media you would like to approach. 

Add interesting and relevant local stories and information. 

Adapt the [template press release](#) on the website with information about your event/activity.


Include your name and contact details so you can answer queries.

Share photos, videos, quotes and infographics that can be published, taking care to comply with copyright/data protection requirements. 

Welcome journalists on the day and introduce them to people they might want to interview.

Think about who could be a potential interviewee.

Follow-up with a phone call to key media. 

Email the press release and photos to media contacts. 

Do persevere! 

Identifying which media to approach

The first step is to identify which media covers your 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 by looking at their website or ringing their offices. You can also look at how to submit your event/activity to event listings.

Tip

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




PREPARING A PRESS RELEASE

The best way to provide information to the media is by sending a press release. You can use the [template available on the website](#) as a basis. Choose a template in the language you need and fill in the information about your event/activity and any region-specific 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.



Tips

Put the important information first. Always try to answer what, who, when, where and why. 

Use short sentences and dynamic language.

Avoid jargon and specialist language, and explain abbreviations.

Include quotes and figures. 

Send a photo the journalists can use (only include photos they can publish without infringement of copyright or personal data rights).

Include your contact details for inquiries. 



BRINGING YOUR PRESS RELEASE TO LIFE

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



European Vocational Skills Week campaign visuals

These should be added to all press releases to show your event/activity is part of the Week. These are available in the [resources](#) section on the website.



Event/activity photos

Photos from your previous events/activities are ideal for including in press releases. Make sure people at your events/activities give their permission to be photographed and understand how the images may be used. This is a legal requirement. You can do this by adding a sentence to invitations or tickets or by placing posters at the event/activity explaining this on the day. Respect the fact that people may not want themselves or their children to be photographed. For shots of individuals, you will need them to sign a release form, so it is best to focus on group shots where individuals are not identifiable.

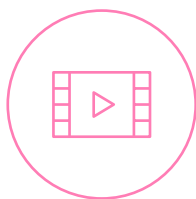


Public domain photos

If you are sourcing images from the internet, be mindful of copyright requirements. You can opt for images in the public domain from sites such as Pixabay and Unsplash as their licence restrictions are simple to follow.



BRINGING YOUR PRESS RELEASE TO LIFE



Videos

Include a link to the Week videos. These can be found in the [resources](#) section on the website. Some have subtitles in all EU languages. Videos grab people's interest and can be used by TV channels and online versions of local and national publications.



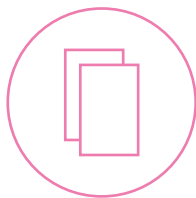
Inspiring stories

Select stories from the Share Your Story library on the website and adapt content from the Week website to demonstrate the importance of VET, the Week and your event/activity.



Quotes

Include a quote in your press release. This can be from speakers at your event/activity, experts from your organisation or testimonials from learners.



Facts & figures on VET

These can be regional, country-specific or EU-wide, but the more 'local' they are, the more your audience will relate to them.



SOURCING FACTS & FIGURES

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

[Education and training monitor: country reports, factsheets and infographics \(DG EAC\)](#)

[VET-in-Europe country reports \(Cedefop\)](#)

[World TVET Database – Country Profiles \(UNEVOC and UNESCO\)](#)

[UOE education database \(UNESCO, OECD and Eurostat\)](#)

[Vocational education and training statistics \(Eurostat\)](#)

[Adult learning statistics \(Eurostat\)](#)

You can also check with national VET agencies and the ministry responsible for education or labour in your country or region, as it is likely they have reports on VET you can use.

EU-level statistics can provide an interesting comparison and Eurostat is a good source of such data. Here are some examples:

- The employment rate of recent VET graduates in Europe is **78.9 %** (2019). Source: [Eurostat – Employment rates of recent graduates, pg. 2](#)
- **10.8 %** of Europe's population aged 25 to 64 participate in adult learning (2019). Source: [Eurostat – Adult learning statistics](#)
- **60 %** of VET graduates find their first long-term job within a month of finishing their studies (80 % after six months) (2018). Source: [A quick guide to EU action on vocational education and training pg. 11](#)
- **29 %** of individuals (EU 27) have low overall digital skills (2019). Source: [Eurostat](#)
- The **COVID-19** pandemic has accentuated the existing digital skills gap and new inequalities are emerging. Source: [European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience, pg. 1](#)



DISTRIBUTING THE PRESS RELEASE

For **local media and daily newspapers**, send it about two weeks before the event/activity. It is also a good idea to send a reminder a day or two before the event/activity. For **specialist publications and magazines**, send the press release earlier as their editorial calendar may get booked up in advance.

You can also post your press release on your organisation's website and share it on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Building relationships with journalists

Establishing a good relationship with journalists can help generate coverage. You can phone them and invite them to cover your event/activity in addition to sending the press release. Make sure you ask whether they have any specific requirements or interests. Send them a reminder before the event. Do persevere!

Conducting successful interviews

Interviews can be conducted face-to-face at the event/activity, over the phone or by email. If you receive a request for an interview:



- Provide the journalist with background information on your organisation and European Vocational Skills Week. Information about the Week, its background and themes can be found on the website.



- Decide in advance what you want to say. You can make notes that will help you.



- Focus on the key messages you want to convey and present your main points first.



- Be concise, and use examples and personal stories to make your story stand out.



- Leave your contact details in case the reporter needs to double-check any information.



- Make sure they understand if you have given them information that you do not want them to quote directly.



- You may want to arrange the interview with someone else, such as a speaker at your event/activity or someone who can give a testimonial. In that case, decide who would be the best person to be interviewed. Check they are happy to be contacted by the press, and brief them on the key messages. Then arrange a time for the journalist to call or meet them.



USEFUL TOOLS ON THE WEBSITE

[European Vocational Skills Week press release template](#)

Available in all EU national languages, ready for you to adapt and send.

[Share Your Story Library](#)

Full of interesting success stories. Feel free to add your own!

[Campaign visual assets](#)

Show that your photos and stories are part of the Week.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How can I make my story more attractive?

Journalists like real-life stories. Personal stories, quotes and figures will make your press release stand out.

Does the European Commission provide media contact details?

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

I have further questions. Who can I contact?

You can email us at empl-vocational-skills-week@cecforma.com or call +386 40 62 64 29.

Alternatively, you can contact us on social media, through the accounts below. Remember to use the campaign hashtags!



@EU_Social

@EuropeanYouthEU

#EU Vocational Skills

#DiscoverYourTalent



@SocialEurope

@EuropeanYouthEU

EU Vocational Skills Week



CONTACT US

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



Email: empl-vocational-skills-week@cecforma.com



Phone: +38 640 626 429



Website: ec.europa.eu/social/vocational-skills-week

