



# EUROPEAN VOCATIONAL SKILLS WEEK



**2019**

Media Relations Toolkit

*#DiscoverYourTalent*

*Employment  
Social Affairs  
and Inclusion*



## About the media relations toolkit

If you are interested in being a part of European Vocational Skills Week 2019, and would like to promote your events and activities, then 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 the following:

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



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

The first three European Vocational Skills Weeks were a great success, and the European Commission is now organising the fourth Week to continue raising awareness of VET. The official Week will take place from 14-18 October 2019 and hundreds of VET-related events and activities will be organised across Europe throughout the year. The European event will take place in Helsinki.

The Week and its corresponding communications campaign bring 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 brings to the economy and the future of work and skills. This year's theme is 'VET for ALL – Skills for Life', so there will be a special focus on the excellent, inclusive and lifelong aspects of VET.

You can use media coverage to promote your event/activity and show how it fits into the Week. This will make more people aware that your event/activity is taking place and motivate them to take part. Media coverage can also raise the profile of your organisation beyond your existing networks, and to spread the message of the event and the Week far and wide. This will help to raise awareness and shift the perception of VET in your country.

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

### Local newspapers, websites and blogs



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 phone 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 their experience.

### Event listings



Event listings are a great way of encouraging people to come to your event, as people are often keen to hear about events that are taking place in their local area. Each listing has its own requirements so you will need to do some research into how to submit your event successfully.

### National newspapers



National newspapers may be interested to hear about the Week and all of the events and activities taking place. Providing facts and figures that are relevant to a general audience, quotes and interesting interview opportunities can help to attract the interest of these publications.

### 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 to these publications can be more technical and providing access to an interesting expert or testimonial will help encourage coverage.

### Radio and TV



Radio and TV may be interested, particularly in the livelier and more unusual events taking place as these will provide a good backdrop for filming and recording.



## Media relations

Here is a simple checklist that you can follow in order to generate coverage for your event and the 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 interesting and relevant country/region-specific stories and information.
- ✓ Share photos, videos, quotes, infographics, etc. that can be published.
- ✓ Think about who could be a potential interviewee.
- ✓ 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.

### Identifying 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 by looking at their website or ringing their media offices. You can also look at how to submit your event to event listings.

**Tip:** A good contact list is the first step for successful media coverage. Getting your event 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 European Vocational Skills Week press release template available on the website, as a basis. Choose a template in the language you require and then simply fill in the information about your event/activity and any region-specific information that you think is interesting and 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.
- 🍃 Remember to include quotes and figures.
- 🍃 Send a photo that the journalists can use (only include photos that they can publish without infringement of copyrights or personal data rights)
- 🍃 Include your contact details for enquiries.

## 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 that your event is part of the Week. These visuals are available on the website.



**Event photos:** Photos from your previous events are ideal for including in press releases. It is therefore good practise to always make sure people at your events know they are being photographed and that they understand how the images may be used. This can be achieved by adding a sentence to invites or tickets. You can also position posters outlining this on the day. It is important to respect 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 therefore it might be best to focus on groups shots where individuals are not identifiable.



**Public domain photos:** If you are sourcing images from the internet, be mindful of any copyright requirements. To be on the safe side, you can opt for images in the public domain from sites such as Pixabay and Unsplash as their licence restrictions are simple to follow.



**Videos:** Include a link to the Week videos, which can be found on the website, some of which have subtitles in all EU languages. Videos are great at grabbing 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 Stories library and repurpose content from the Week website to demonstrate the importance of VET, the Week and your event.



**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, country-specific or EU-wide.

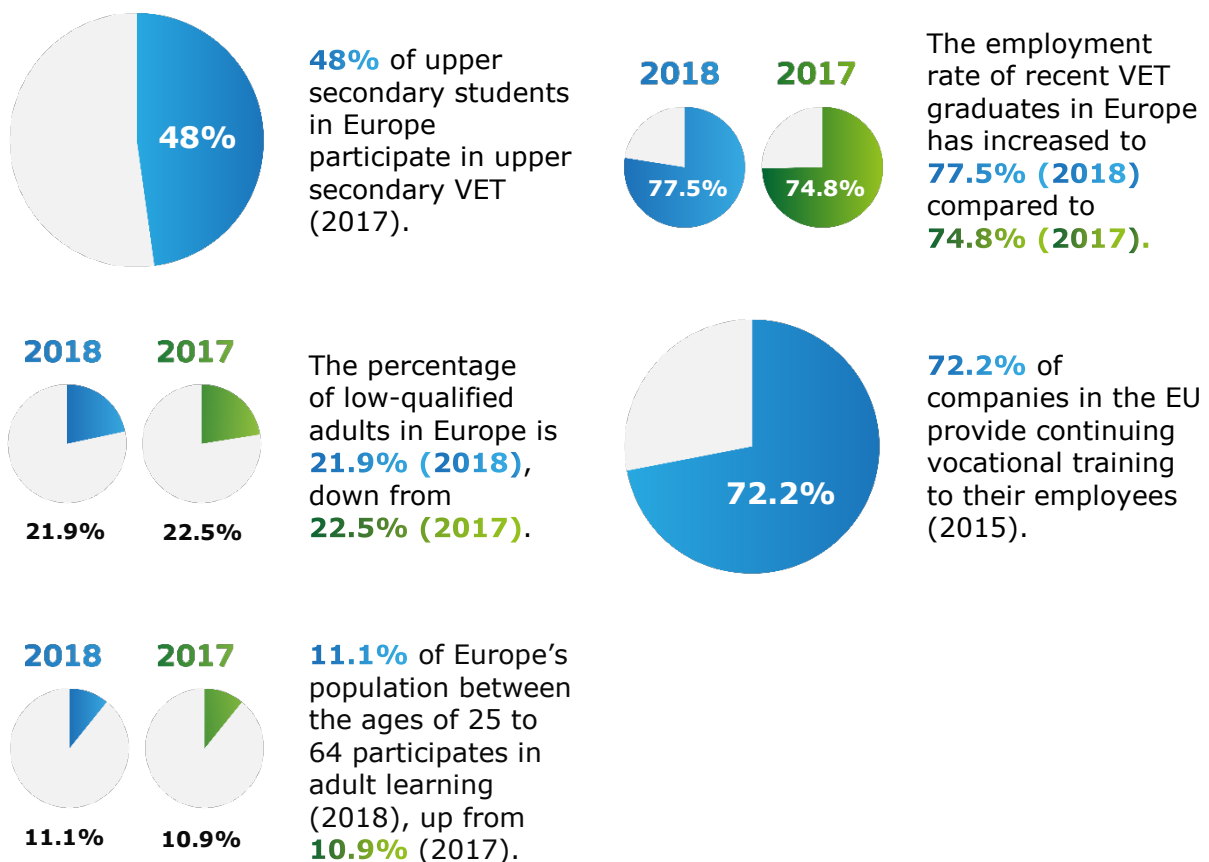
## Sourcing facts and figures

Your organisation may 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 2018: country reports, factsheets and infographics (DG EAC).
- VET-in-Europe country reports (Cedefop).
- World TVET Database – Country Profiles (International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (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 the national VET agencies and the ministry/department for education or labour in your country, as it is likely they have national reports on VET.

EU-level statistics can provide an interesting comparison and Eurostat is a good source of such data:



## Sending the press release

For **local media** and **daily newspapers**, you should send the press release around two weeks before the event. It is also a good idea to send a reminder a day or two before the event.

For **specialist publications** and magazines, you should 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 setup of each listing.

## Building relationships with journalists

Establishing a good relationship with journalists can help to generate 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 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 European Vocational Skills Week 2019 leaflet to hand out. The leaflet can be found on the website.



## Conducting 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.



### Tips:

- Provide the journalist with background information on your organisation and European Vocational Skills Week. Information about the Week, its background and themes for 2019 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 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.
- 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, and brief them on what to talk about and the Week's key messages. Then arrange a time for the journalist to call or meet up with them.



## Useful tools

- **European Vocational Skills Week press release template:** Available in all EU national languages, and ready for you to adapt and send.
- **Share Your Story library:** Full of interesting success stories for you to use. Feel free to add your own stories to this too!
- **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 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. As the Week and its corresponding campaign is taking place across the EU 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 can I contact?

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