

## PRESS RELEASE

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Printed products are essential and so are the people who create them. To ensure the competitiveness of the **graphical sector in Europe**, we must work **together** to promote the **image of print** and ensure we both equip and inspire **future generations**. The Print Your Future project<sup>1</sup>, co-coordinated by Intergraf alongside UNI Europa Graphical & Packaging, supports **recruitment** and **employment** in the European graphical sector – helping companies to hire the **best talent** and secure a bright future for the printing industry. The project closed after two years of work.

### Print Your Future Project

The Print Your Future project ([www.printyourfuture.eu](http://www.printyourfuture.eu)) was designed and co-coordinated by the European social partners for the graphical sector: **Intergraf** (representing employers) and **UNI Europa Graphical & Packaging** (representing workers). The project was funded by the **European Commission's** Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs, and Inclusion, and supported by four country experts: the **Association of Estonian Printing and Packaging Industry - AEPPI** (Estonia), **Stuttgart Media University (Hochschule der Medien Stuttgart)** (Germany), **GOC** (the Netherlands), and the **Associação Portuguesa das Indústrias Gráficas e Transformadoras do Papel - APIGRAF** (Portugal). The project was also supported by a technical expert: **Spin360**.

### Final Report

A **Final Report** drafted by Intergraf and the project consultant, SPIN360, is available [HERE](#). This report includes a detailed description of the Print Your Future project, namely project objectives, methodology, key project findings, as facts and figures in recruitment and employment of young people, communication and dissemination activities, a list of best practices across Europe, and results of surveys that have been carried out.

### Best Practice Toolkit

One of the primary deliverables of the Print Your Future project was a **Best Practice Toolkit on recruitment and employment**. Download it for free to learn more about how to find, how to attract, and how to keep the next generation in the European graphical sector. The toolkit is aimed at companies, associations, and trade unions – as well as any other stakeholders with an interest in recruitment and employment in the printing industry.

### DOWNLOAD THE BEST PRACTICE TOOLKIT [HERE](#)

Take a look at the toolkit and get inspired! It is available for free in 8 languages: Dutch, English, Estonian, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish.

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<sup>1</sup> VP/2019/001/0061: Attracting new skilled workforce for quality jobs in the European graphic industry

## Final Conference

The **Print Your Future Project Final Conference** took place in Brussels and online on Wednesday 3 November 2021. Close to 40 people joined the event in-person, and a further 65 online. Delegates participated from across Europe and beyond, with 26 countries represented. Participants included the European Commission, national and European printing associations, printing companies, trade unions, press, education providers, public entities, HR specialists, and young people in the sector.

Specialist speakers joined project partners and country experts to delve deeper into the topics of **recruitment** and **employment** in the European graphical sector. The event was moderated by Jos Steutelings, Managing Director of VIGC. Topics included:

- Millennials and Gen Z, how to attract them
- The world of work: next generation
- Project objectives and key results
- Best Practice Toolkit: how to find, attract and keep the best talent
- Country insight Estonia: innovative communications
- Country insight Portugal: partnering with schools
- Country insight the Netherlands: collaborating with young people
- Retention management in the printing industry
- Takeaways and way forward

One of the key takeaways was that the industry needs to **listen to young people** in order to learn how to more attractive. What are they looking for from their employer and their career? How can the printing industry offer this? Companies must routinely ask these questions and – crucially – listen to and act on the responses they receive. Failure to do so will affect companies' ability to recruit the right people and will ultimately impact their ability to remain competitive and agile in this dynamic market.

A lack of new staff to fill required roles is already affecting the competitiveness of many printing companies across Europe, so **the time to act is now**. Many businesses have started to integrate the above advice into their operations and are thriving, but others continue to lag behind.

Two of the most striking presentations were given by **Rita Estevinha Silva** (Portugal) and **Bastien Combeau** (France), winners of the 2021 and 2020 **Intergraf Young Talent Award**. They addressed how printing companies need to adapt to be attractive to young people. Rita highlighted the irony that *“by their nature printing companies are in the communication business but they often do not make enough effort to promote themselves”*. She urged companies that do not already do so to make better use of digital tools (like social media) to attract younger generations. Bastien emphasised the essential nature of print, explaining that printing companies must *“show how important the printing industry is and what it does for all other sectors”*. You can download Rita and Bastien's Intergraf Young Talent Award entries in full [here](#).

## Way forward

**Millennials** and **Generation Z** printers of the present and future have different expectations for their employers and careers. As these generations are now the largest job seeker group, companies who cannot recruit them are missing out on masses of potential talent – a problem that will only increase as time passes. Businesses must adapt and offer **more than just a salary**. Digitally connected workplaces that are supportive, inclusive, and non-hierarchical must be the norm, and work-life balance must be an ongoing conversation between employers and workers. Moreover, print is a creative and inherently sustainable sector. Companies must continually demonstrate this – both internally and externally.

The **Print Your Future project** has come to a close, but the need to focus on and improve recruitment and employment practices across the European graphical sector remains critical. This project is a small part of a much larger conversation which the industry needs to ensure continues at all levels and in all countries.

**Intergraf** and **UNI Europa Graphical & Packaging**, European social partners for the graphical sector and co-coordinators of the Print Your Future project, will continue working on the topics of skills and recruitment in the framework of our **European Social Dialogue**. We urge national social partners across Europe to do the same.

-ENDS-

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<p>The <b>European printing industry</b> is made up of some 112,000 printing companies (95% SMEs), which employ 640,000 people and generate a combined turnover of €82 billion (EU27 + UK, Switzerland, and Norway).</p> <p>Intergraf (<a href="http://www.intergraf.eu">www.intergraf.eu</a>) is the <b>European printing industry association</b>, representing employers in this sector. We are a Brussels-based umbrella organisation with 20 members from 19 countries and 5 Associate Members from 4 countries. Our primary task is to represent and advocate for the printing industry in Europe, working with European Union to support the sector's competitiveness through advocacy, information-sharing, networking, social dialogue, and European projects.</p> <p>Contact <b>Irene Paolinelli</b>, Communications &amp; Policy Officer at Intergraf, for more information: <a href="mailto:ipaolinelli@intergraf.eu">ipaolinelli@intergraf.eu</a>.</p>	<p>UNI Europa (<a href="http://www.uni-europa.org">www.uni-europa.org</a>) is the European Trade Union Federation representing workers in the services sectors.</p> <p>The Graphic and Packaging sector brings together 56 trade union organisations organising in 31 countries, with more than 180.000 members in total.</p> <p>Through UNI Europa, the unions of workers in the Graphical and Packaging sectors coordinate to build workers' power. With their joint organising efforts, they work together to embed rooted and inclusive structures for durable progress from the workplace up. They advocate together within different institutional spaces, including the EU, to ensure policies favour working people.</p>