

It's safe to say, when ringing in the new year of 2020, nobody could have predicted how this year would play out. Like most, my year was planned out with so much to look forward to. Some plans that didn't quite go to plan due to Covid restrictions included;

March should have been my return to Ireland Skills Live. This time, I would return a champion and see the event from a different perspective. Unfortunately, with the first lockdown, came the indefinite postponement due to the size and nature of the event.

In my current role with Lidl Ireland, in February, I had just returned from operational training and joined the head office project team. After 3 weeks of settling into this team, I was then redeployed to the warehouse. Due to the massive volumes of stock moving through the warehouse to keep the stores fully stocked, I jumped straight into working as a warehouse operative. Here I stayed working for 5 months before transitioning back into a project role which then involved working from home.

The one year anniversary of WorldSkills Kazan came around and unfortunately the planned reunion of team Ireland could not go ahead due to region lockdowns. Another WorldSkills event which didn't go to plan was the General Assembly due to be held in Dublin in October. This event moved virtual on a reduced scale. Thankfully, Ireland will get the opportunity once again to host this event in 2023.



Team Ireland

Having worked on the twinning between CILT Eastern Section Ireland and CILT Thames Valley Group, I was honoured to be asked to be a guest speaker at their first event of the 2020/2021 season. An event that was almost a year in the planning then had to move virtual.



CILT Thames Valley Group Webinar

European Vocational Skills Week which was due to take place in Berlin, will now take place online. While I am disappointed to be unable to attend in person, I am grateful for the opportunity to still participate online.



Adam Flynn (Team Ireland, bronze medal winner in Industrial Mechanic Millwright) and myself at EU Vocational Skills Week Finland 2019

Logistics is all about expecting the unexpected and adapting. It's easy to look back on this year and dwell on the negatives of the lockdowns, missed holidays, plans, etc but I like to look back and take the positives from it. I got a great learning opportunity in work by spending time in the warehouse. Many events were able to go digital and still take place. Moving the events online also opened them to wider audiences which provided great networking opportunities. Seeing everyone adapt to the "new normal" has been brilliant. If 2020 is teaching us anything, I believe it is to enjoy each and every moment we have and to not take anything for granted.