



# NEWSLETTER

Issue 3/2018

## Welcome!

## What is VINCE?

VINCE is an ERASMUS+ project that is developing training materials for university staff working in processes of Validation of Prior Learning (VPL) and Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning (VNIL) with migrant and/or refugee students. The objective is to provide university staff with tools to be better equipped when working with newcomers who want to access Higher Education (HE) and want to be more aware and integrated in European society.

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## VINCE case studies

One of the first tasks of the VINCE project partners consisted in the collection of case studies representing relevant good practices in which validation of people's prior learning experiences was part of the integration process of a refugee or newcomer in the welcoming country. So far a total of 51 individual cases from 8 European countries have been collected, structured according to the steps of the validation process. The countries reporting on individual cases include: Austria (9 cases), Denmark (4), France (6), Germany (7), Greece (5), Hungary (5), the Netherlands (10) and Norway (5). Twelve cases were collected based on evidence provided by VNIL professionals involved in the process of integration of refugees/migrants. The transversal analysis of the case studies collected is currently being completed and will be available on the [VINCE platform](#) by September 2018. The analysis will highlight the common successful or challenging aspects of the cases.

Now it is your turn! Read about the **open call for case studies** in the next paragraph.

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## VINCE Validation Prize 2019

The VINCE **open call for case studies** and [VINCE Validation Prize 2019](#) have just been launched! The **VINCE Validation Prize 2019** is an award given to the most innovative and transferable initiatives in the area of the Validation of Prior Learning (VPL) and/or Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning (VNIL) in all sectors of education in Europe. The 2019 prize follows the initiative of the OBSERVAL and OBSERVAL-Net projects, which awarded a total of 5 *Validation Prizes* in 2009, 2010 and 2013.

This time we are looking for practices showing that validation makes a difference, especially cases illustrating inspiring and innovative solutions to help newcomers (with a focus on individuals with a migrant or refugee status) to get their skills and competences recognised and validated. The three best cases will win a trip to attend the final event of VINCE in Barcelona in November 2019<sup>1</sup>.

The call is open to trade unions, companies, sectoral/branch organisations, training funds, professional groups or individual workers, NGOs, VET schools, universities, public authorities, institutions of lifelong learning, civil society organisations, social partners, VNIL professionals and researchers who have been or are working in VPL/VNIL. Everybody interested is invited to submit case studies **by 10 April 2019** using the **Case Study template** available on the [project website](#).

Tell us about your good practice! You may be one of the winners of the **VINCE Validation Prize!**

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<sup>1</sup> Full details about terms and conditions of this prize are available [here](#).



## Guidelines for VPL professionals

Another major project step has just been accomplished! The VINCE set of Guidelines for Higher Education staff working on validation issues are now available on the [VINCE platform](#)! They are designed to help VPL professionals to support newcomers and refugees in accessing Higher Education and Validation and have been made available in the form of those frequently asked questions (FAQs) relevant to refugees and newcomers: *what do newcomers and refugees normally ask? Which are their needs and which are their main worries?* There are 5 VINCE Guidelines:

1. [Welcome to Europe](#)
2. [Welcome to this Country](#)
3. [Welcome to Higher Education](#)
4. [Welcome to this Institution](#)
5. [Welcome to Validation](#)

HE teachers, validators, advisors and administrators are invited to use the guidelines, as well as adapt and improve them according to the specific needs of their target groups and to their own validation procedure, internal institutional rules or assistance put in place. The Guidelines can also be downloaded in languages other than EN and adapted to the specific needs of the users.

We highly recommended all interested institutions to add a section on their website specifically addressed to refugees/migrants interested in studying at their institution, which could include the adapted FAQs provided by VINCE.

Should you need further information and advice to adapt the Guidelines to your own institution's needs, you can [get in touch with us](#) !



## Training workshop in Oslo

The VINCE partners met in Oslo on 4 June to participate to the Training Course for validation professionals hosted and organised by [NOKUT](#), the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education. During the training the partners learnt about the special procedures established by NOKUT for recognition of prior learning of refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situation. The validation procedures in place at the UBO, the University of Western Brittany, were also presented and discussed, as another relevant and successful existing practice.

The upcoming step will be the design of a generic prototype training course for HE teachers, validators, advisors and administrators, adapted to the needs of newcomers and refugees. The tool will include recommendations how to structure and organise a course for VPL professionals, as well as key advice to trainers. It will embed the use of the guidelines developed by VINCE, the good practices collected, the experience of the partners, trying to respond to the specific needs of newcomers and refugees.

## VINCE at the 50<sup>th</sup> **eucen** Conference in Bergen

The [50th eucen Conference](#) was held in Bergen (Norway), 6-8 June 2018. This year's Conference's topic was the evolution of university lifelong learning and its future opportunities in times of transition. The VINCE project was presented in one of the [parallel sessions](#) of the Conference, the one dedicated to "professional transitions". The presentation was done by Carme Royo, **eucen**'s Executive Director, and was focused on how adapted VPL procedures can be key in helping newcomers demonstrate their knowledge & skills. The tools developed by the project can also help VPL professionals and HE staff to move into a more social understanding attitude and prepare them for new challenging situations. Around 50 people coming from different higher education institutions around Europe but also from non-academic institutions participated in the activity.



## VINCE at the European Validation Festival in Brussels



The [European Validation Festival](#) took place on 14-15 June 2018 in Brussels, with the aims to share practices and exchange ideas and knowledge on validation of informal and non-formal learning. The VINCE project, represented by [eucen](#) and by [SOLIDAR](#) was also present. VINCE was presented by Carme Royo, **eucen**'s Executive Director, and showcased in one of the stands of the "marketplace" organised to present regional, national, sectoral and European practices, giving the participants the opportunity to meet, discuss, and learn with and from peers. The Festival gathered around 300 practitioners, experts, policy makers, and users from the worlds of employment, social partners, adult education and VET, youth, higher education.

## Becoming Associate Partner

Are you interested in VINCE? [Contact us](#) and we will send you letter template you can fill in to join us as Associate Partner: you will be the first to be informed about the project results and invited to participate in some of our activities!

## VINCE Partnership

**eucen** (coordinators) | SOLIDAR | Université de Bretagne Occidentale | VIA University College | EC-VPL | NOKUT | Danube University of Krems | CPZ International Centre | Ludwig-Maximilians University | Fachhochschule Burgenland | University of Pécs | IVC den Helder | Club for UNESCO of Piraeus and Islands.