



Recognition of
Prior Learning
Your Learning Counts

   www.priorlearning.ie



 **IRISH
UNIVERSITIES
ASSOCIATION**

 **Human
Capital
Initiative**

Recognition of Prior Learning for newcomers

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Why RPL/VPL? Why is it important for newcomers?



european university
continuing education network

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www.eucen.eu

What is eucen and why RPL/VPL is a topic in eucen?

- **eucen** - European university continuing education network, is an Association (not-for-profit) legally established under Belgium law – founded in 1991 informally by 15 universities and officially registered in 1994
- **eucen** Secretariat is located in Barcelona (ES) since 2000
- **eucen** has currently 160 members (institutional membership) from 34 countries including 18 National/Regional ULLL Network (NNs)
- **eucen's mission:**
 - to promote and advance LLL within HEIs in Europe and elsewhere
 - to foster universities' influence in the development of LLL knowledge and policies throughout Europe
- LLL as the **Flexible Learning** approach of HEIs



What is VPL/RPL?

- Validation of prior learning is a tool promoted and supported by the EU and all member states to enable educational institutions to **recognise learning**, wherever it has taken place, in a framework based on **outcomes** (results) and not on the way the outcomes have been obtained...!!
- Learning happens outside the classroom as well as inside it, across a wide range of activities and at various times throughout the lifetime of an individual
 - *Who in the audience can say that has not learnt something (whatever) in the last week?*
 - *Where have you learnt it? In a formal classroom? In social media? In your community?*

Some eucen projects on RPL/VPL



- Early works from 2001: Transfine, Refine and OBSERVAL
- InnoVal | *Objectives*: to offer innovative and reliable assessment methods for validation to disadvantaged groups (e.g. migrants or long-term unemployed)
- OBSERVAL-Net | **eucen** coordinated project. *Objectives*: to create transversal networks and transnational evidence-based models of best practices; to develop coherent, comprehensive and flexible models for VPL practices and recommendations; to mainstream these practices through strategic development and policy making at national/regional level
- VINCE | **eucen** coordinated project. *Objectives*: to develop HE staff training in VPL to meet the needs of refugees and migrants, including a set of guidelines and a training course, and a set of policy recommendations for decision makers
- TRANSVAL-EU | Currently **eucen** is member of the Experts Board. *Project's objectives*: to develop tools to validate transversal skills

But... why VINCE?



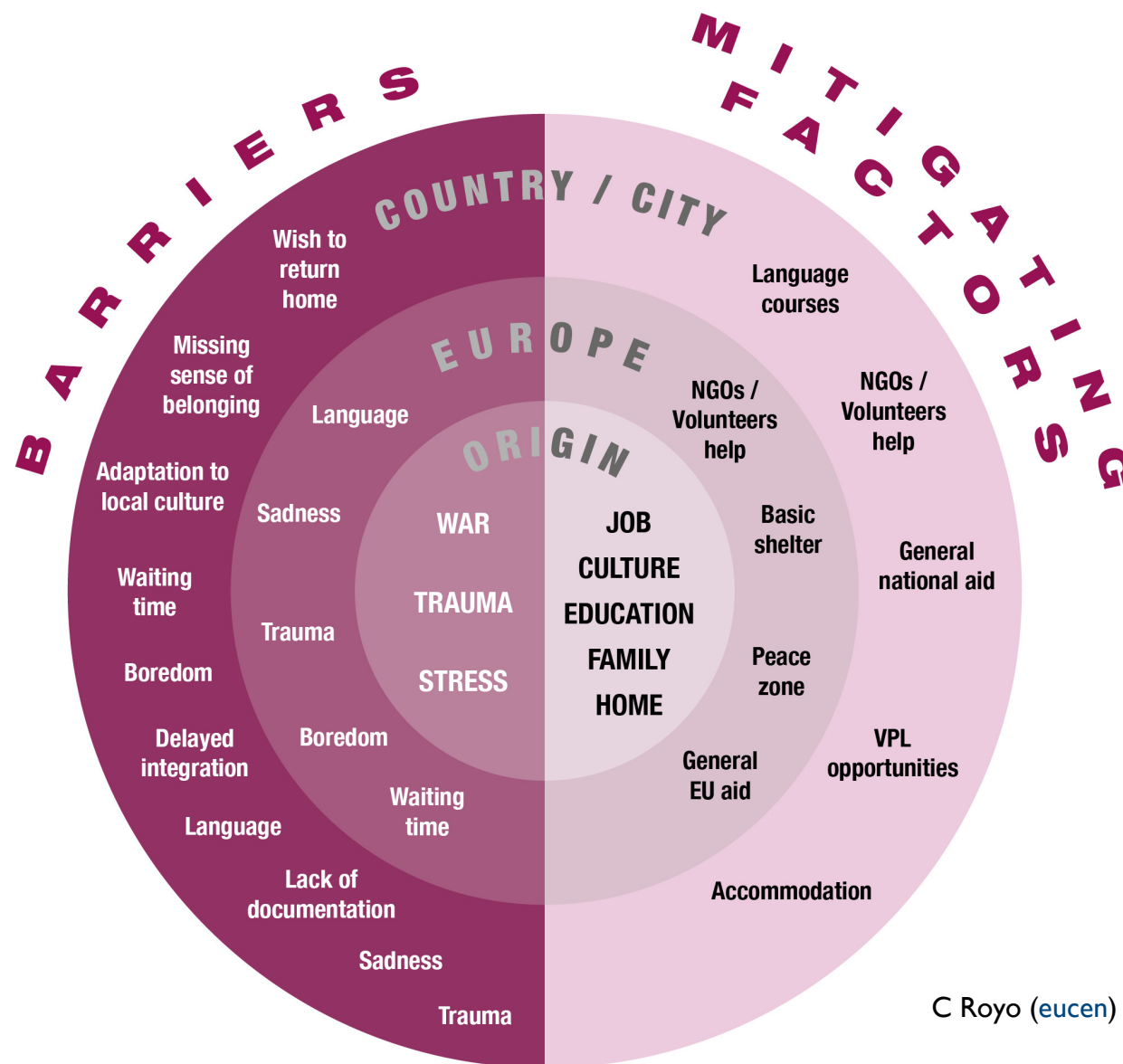
In September 2015 an image impacted the whole world...

...thought this was only a small sample of what was happening. But finally everyone understood the magnitude of the situation and Europe's policies changed.



eucen started designing the VINCE project proposal – it was not enough to accept newcomers in our countries, we had to also help them, give them back their dignity and a chance in our society: we thought VPL/RPL was "the tool" to do so!

Newcomers – the VINCE study



C Royo ([eucen](#)) 2017, for the VINCE project



Key points



- **Increased number** of asylum seekers and migrants in Europe exponentially in the last decade – it will continue
- The **legal barriers** for these individuals to start a new life in their host country are high at European and national levels and involve long waiting periods
- **Lack of documentation** makes the incorporation of newcomers to HE/VET studies or directly to the labour market very difficult
- **Language and cultural** barriers are a challenge

- **Validation/Recognition** of formal, non-formal and informal learning might be of help in these situations
- However, **staff** attending newcomers are not always prepared for the differences and needs that newcomers have – they might not fully understand the situation of these individuals



<http://vince.eucen.eu>

Let's see a real case



**Waed EL KUTEIFAN –
A role model for
today's conference**

Why is RPL/VPL important?



- VPL is a **powerful tool for social inclusion and recognition of the talents and capabilities** of individuals towards HE and/or employability
- It **does not matter the candidate's origin or background**, VPL is always an option
- It is an **individualised processes**, so VPL allows newcomers to receive the attention and help they need
- Opportunities for individuals to **validate their knowledge**, skills and competences acquired through **non-formal or informal environments**
- Opportunities to **obtain a qualification** on the basis of validated learning outcomes
- Opportunity to restore **pride and self-esteem** to candidates

VPL values knowledge and gives another chance to individuals



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Thank you for your attention
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