

January 19, 2016

VALERU Field-Visit at UBO: Empowering people through VNIL

The third VALERU field visit took place at UBO ([Université de Bretagne Occidentale](#)) in Brest from the 16th to the 17th of December 2015. The field visit was dedicated not only to VALERU project meetings, but above all to gaining insight into the validation procedures at UBO. An important point about VNIL procedures is: The validation of non-formal and informal learning is enshrined in [French law](#). Therefore, all learning is worth the same - it doesn't matter where it took place - at school, university, courses, at the workplace or during leisure time. This is an important point, especially when it comes to supporting more flexible learning pathways in a fast changing, increasingly digital, (knowledge) society. Providing high-quality validation procedures at higher education institutions not only can strengthen the competitiveness of the individual on the labour market, address skills mismatches or support the competitiveness of a country all in all. ([see joint report of the EU on the ET2020 strategy](#)) A very important thing, I learned at UBO, was that validation procedures support the empowerment of people in a very holistic way. Candidates of VNIL procedures find out more about the skills and competences they already have, but haven't been really aware of yet. Getting into a VNIL procedure is about developing awareness, what you are really capable of. People tend to attach little value to what they have learned outside formal education, e.g. at the workplace, because it seems almost natural to them throughout their years of experience in work. Validation procedures attempt to make this great amount tacit knowledge more explicit and tangible, to have it valued and to make use the full range of your competences and skills.

We talked with jury members of VNIL procedures at UBO and they underlined, that people are often too modest and they don't show many of their skills. The VNIL advisor and the VNIL jury try hard to find out, what the real competences of the candidate are. The VNIL advisor supports the candidate in reflecting his or her practice and therefore has an important role within the validation process.

It was inspiring to listen to Sebastien de Villèle, a candidate who succeeded his validation for an interpreter/translation diploma. He described how the whole validation process changed his way of seeing himself and his career. Self-awareness is a powerful tool. Validating non-formal and informal learning is also about seeing strengths and weaknesses. This isn't an easy task - and it's a rich experience. People go out of this experience much stronger.

I want to thank our colleagues at UBO for welcoming us so warmly in Brest and for giving us insight into their experiences. I think I can talk for the whole VALERU-team: It was a truly inspiring field visit for us.

Read more about the field-visit at news section of the VALERU VNIL platform:

<http://valeru.net/vnil-field-visit-at-ubo/>

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