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PRESS RELEASE

Malta joins European Network for Asylum Reception Organisations

A multinational delegation from the European Network for Asylum Reception Organizations (ENARO), which Malta joined last month, were in Malta recently on a two day fact-finding mission to explore ways to extend technical co-operation in the field of the reception of asylum seekers.

The seven members forming the delegation hail from various European entities concerned with reception namely: Fedasil (Belgium), Hero (Norway), and the Danish Red Cross. Mr. Maarten Visser from the Central Organisation for Asylum Seekers (Netherlands) headed the delegation. The delegation held talks with various Ministry officials from the Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs and the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity during which Malta's particular circumstances in relation to immigration were discussed and views exchanged with regards to reception practices across Europe.

The ENARO visit also linked up to an EU project financed under the ARGO programme and in this context builds on the work carried out locally by COA within the same framework. The project *Intra-European Burden-sharing in the field of Asylum*, is being run in partnership between the Government of Malta and the Dutch Government. This project has enabled the upgrading of open and closed centres. Also as a result of this project 36 refugees were resettled in the Netherlands last year under an innovative burden-sharing arrangement now also being offered by other EU members states.