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My participation in the ENARO-programme is considered to be a cornerstone in the development of my professional identity. Despite the fact that my participation was random, considering the way I became involved, the knowledge and experiences I have acquired surpassed my initial expectations.

What really contributed to the above was the fact that we had the opportunity to interact with other disciplines and to exchange knowledge, as well as the fact that we were exposed to direct observation of other implementation practices of European asylum policy.

The Netherlands

I consider myself lucky because the host country was the Netherlands, a country that has an established long experience in the planning, implementation and evaluation of social policies that target asylum seekers. The Netherlands, as a model country of the best practices in this field, has contributed to the following:

- enriched our choices regarding the handling of asylum seekers
- the development of services
- the evaluation of needs; re-assessment
- evaluation of current practices and innovations

The above became the theme of the presentation that I delivered to the Asylum Services in Cyprus as a result of my participation.

Good practices

In particular, the following best practices were recommended to the Asylum Services for future implementation:

- planning and implementation of specialised and well organised (e)services targeted to vulnerable groups (such as asylum seekers with mental, emotional and psychiatric disorders, unaccompanied minors)
- orientation phase
- motives given to asylum seekers for participation in different activities in the community
- set up of Application Centres

What has really pleasantly surprised me is how clear boundaries are maintained with regard to the rights and responsibilities of the asylum seekers.

ENARO

Participation in the ENARO-programme has contributed in Cyprus to the following levels:

- micro: the professional and personal development of participants
- meso: the setting in which the participant is employed
- macro: the arena in which asylum and social policy is developed and implemented

I hope that in the future we will also act as a host country of similar projects in order to facilitate the communication of different professionals from different countries; and in order to share and exchange knowledge in more specialized areas such as unaccompanied minors, torture victims, single parents etc. Personally, I consider it an honour to have participated in such activities.