

MALTA 2013



On January 22-26, 18 participants from 11 EU countries gathered again in Malta for the annual RHP Round Table. Besides the representatives from various churches and a number of organizations, there were also several former as well as current refugees who took part. The meetings confirmed again the value of gathering with others who share similar values and concerns in order to gain a bigger picture. We also affirmed our commitment to invite others in the future and as always to welcome refugees themselves as valued partners.

Several leaders from regional Evangelical Alliances, including the Associate General Director for the World Evangelical Alliance visited our meetings at different points. We confirmed again that the goals of the RHP in Europe are: 1) Offer an annual Round Table for sharing and learning. 2) Promote the Refugee Sunday of the Evangelical Alliance. 3) Offer a platform for joint projects.

There was a mix of scheduled activities. Sessions included reports from various ministries, as well as numerous prayer requests. There were opportunities for all the participants to share. Peter Stanley from the UK led us in two sessions about human trafficking. We also visited the Jesuit Refugee Service, toured several locations in Malta and heard separately from Saint Andrew's Church and Marcelle Bugre about their efforts to address the issues that migrants are facing in Malta.

Like past years, we also had the opportunity to hear directly from refugees themselves. Not only did we have former refugees contributing to all of our discussions, but we invited two current refugees living in Malta to describe their own journey. Interviewed by Frank Wilmot, It was a highlight to hear how these two refugees have witnessed God's work in their lives as Christ's followers. We prayed specifically for them.

Other highlights included:

- The realization that the fight against human trafficking and refugee ministry are closely related.
- We were impressed with how God is raising up refugees to reach refugees and to bring refugees into the church's mission.
- We were encouraged by the amazing resources that were shared and the diversity of the body that came together for this round table.
- The brevity of worship, prayer requests and country reports kept things flowing and allowed us to catch the important points.
- Seeing a local church get excited about refugee ministries.
- Seeing the church crypt and the future ministry of the Asulon Centre was worth the cost!
- Prayer together, seeing the prayer room ministry in Malta, and hearing about our own prayer initiatives.

In January 2014, the RHP-Europe round table will meet in Germany. We have been challenged to promote Refugee Sunday this coming year (June 16 + 23) in our countries and to continue our networking with each other. We would like to invite more key leaders from local ministries to the Round Table. We want to remember that while English is our common language, we must speak slowly and clearly and come prepared to share the stories and pictures of what God is doing among us.