

2 June 2006

## **2007 starts now: 'European Year of Equal Opportunities for All' gets green light**

The European Commission yesterday welcomed the decision by the Council and Parliament to designate 2007 as 'European Year of Equal Opportunities for All'. The year will aim to make Europeans aware of their right not to be discriminated against, to promote equal opportunities in areas from work to healthcare, and to show how diversity makes the EU stronger. The year will have four themes: rights, representation, recognition and respect, with a total budget of EUR15 million for the 12 months activities.

The year's budget will be spent on, inter alia, an EU-wide information campaign, new Eurobarometer surveys on discrimination and attitudes towards it, as well as hundreds of national initiatives such writing competitions for schools on the theme of respect and tolerance or prizes for companies with the most effective diversity training. There will also be the first ever Equality Summit gathering together ministers, equality bodies, civil society and social partners.

Most activities will be co-ordinated nationally to ensure that they take place as locally as possible. The EUR7.6 million dedicated to national, local and regional activities will be matched by co-financing from national public and private sources.

Further information about the Year can be found at this new website:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/equality2007/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equality2007/index_en.htm)