



Strasbourg, 25.04.2007

## European Diversity Truck hitting the road

***The European Diversity Truck will hit the road in Strasbourg today and embark on its tour across Europe. Starting from the seat of the European Parliament, the Truck will promote diversity and equal opportunities for all. The journey will take in 19 countries, covering more than 18,000 km. Visiting city centres, universities, job fairs, and public festivals, the mobile information platform will inform people about their rights to equal treatment and promote the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All.***

Vladimir Špidla, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, together with Pierre Moscovici, Vice-President of the European Parliament and Martine Roure, the Chamber's rapporteur on the 2007 European Year, will unveil the EU Diversity Truck in front of the Strasbourg seat of the European Parliament today. The truck promotes the campaign "For Diversity – Against Discrimination" and transports key messages of the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All.

Vladimir Špidla said the tour facilitated direct discussion with citizens on the benefits of diversity. "Let's not wait for the people to come to us, let's go to the people. The European Diversity Truck will be found on market squares, in front of schools; it will be at employment fairs and cultural festivals to inform citizens about their rights to equal opportunities. This is an effective way of reaching out to Europeans." Mr Špidla emphasized.

The EU anti-discrimination laws are amongst the most advanced in the world. Yet, only one third of citizens know their rights should they become victims of discrimination. 64% of Europeans are of the opinion that discrimination is widespread in their country and 51% think that not enough is being done to fight discrimination.

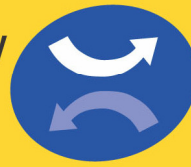
The truck provides a platform for NGOs and people suffering from discrimination. Those who might otherwise have no opportunity to put forward their case can make their voices heard.

Also, thanks to the active involvement of prominent Members of the European Parliament as speakers and panellists, the launch event will give the tour a powerful start. Parliamentarians on stage and in the audience will carry the message of the European Year back to their constituencies.

The kick-off in Strasbourg will feature a press talk, the opening of the "Ability Park", a panel discussion with Commissioner Špidla and a prize award for students' dedication. The interactive 'Ability Park' will create awareness of the barriers people with disabilities face in everyday life. Visitors are invited to use a wheelchair to overcome obstacles such as curves, narrow passages, stairs and a seesaw. They will also be challenged with identifying sounds, smells and everyday objects using limited senses.

The 2007 Truck Tour will visit for example a students' event in Szeged on 31 May, the Diversity Festival in Madrid on 29 June, the Christopher Street Day in Saarbrücken on 29 July, the Dublin





Hurling tournament on 2 September and in October 2007 a conference on diversity in business in Rome as well as the "Caravan of Regions" in Brussels.

The tour will allow guests to participate in a wide range of different activities and, thus, become a part of the European campaign "For Diversity – Against Discrimination".

For more information on the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All, see <http://equality2007.europa.eu>. For further information and photos of the tour, please see [www.stop-discrimination.info](http://www.stop-discrimination.info).

### Route of the European Truck Tour 2007

25.04.	Strasbourg	France
27.04.	Nancy	France
07.05.	Graz	Austria
09.05.	Maribor	Slovenia
18.05.	Riga	Latvia
22.05.	Tartu	Estonia
25.05.	Vilnius	Lithuania
30.05.	Szeged	Hungary
04.06.	Sofia	Bulgaria
16.06.	St. Julians	Malta
22.06.	Genova	Italy
29.06.	Madrid	Spain
30.06.	Madrid	Spain
13.07.	Lisbon	Portugal
20.07.	Luxembourg	Luxembourg
24.07.	Liverpool	UK
25.07.	Liverpool	UK
29.07.	Saarbrücken	Germany
04.08.	Nove mesto nad Vahem	Slovakia
08.08.	Budapest	Hungary
15.08.	Copenhagen	Denmark
17.08.	Aalborg	Denmark
20.08.	Leipzig	Germany





Continued tour after a short break in August:

11.09.	Brussels	Belgium
Sept.	t.b.c.	Ireland
Sept.	Edinburgh	UK
29.09.	Brussels	Belgium
Oct.	Milan	Italy
Oct.	Milan	Italy
Oct.	Brussels	Belgium
20.11.	Lisbon	Portugal
21.11	Lisbon	Portugal

