



Brussels, 16<sup>th</sup> April 2007

## **Undercover tale of discrimination wins EU press award**

**Brussels 16.04.2007 – A moving undercover account of the exploitation of foreign workers in Italy’s Puglia region has won first prize in this year’s “For Diversity, Against Discrimination.” EU Journalist Award. Second and third place went to Hungary and Belgium respectively, while a Finnish entry won the special Young Journalism prize. Vladimír Špidla, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, will honour the winners at a prize ceremony in Brussels today.**

The award is a European Commission initiative honouring journalists whose work contributes to a better understanding of diversity and discrimination. “The media’s role in raising awareness of these important issues cannot be underestimated,” Commissioner Špidla said. “The courage and dedication of these journalists is to be applauded. It highlights the urgent need to continue striving for diversity in society.”

The first prize (a trip worth 4500 Euro) went to Fabrizio Gatti (Italy). His article "I was a slave in Puglia", published in "L'Espresso magazine", informs the general public about the difficult situation foreign workers face in southern Italy. Some are subjected to working conditions which the author equates to slavery. Posing as a migrant worker, Gatti used thorough research and vivid narration to illustrate "the difficult situation of Europe’s second class citizens who experience severe discrimination based on their ethnic origin," according to the jury.

Second prize (a trip worth 3000 Euro) goes to the Hungarian journalist Miklós Hargitai. His article “Our very own gypsy daughter” was published by *Népszabadság Online*. It explores complex issues surrounding adoption of minority groups, in this case Roma people and draws the attention of a broad audience to diversity.

Third prize (a trip worth 2000 Euro) went to Petra Sjouwerman, a Belgian journalist, who is a correspondent for *De Morgen* in Scandinavia. Her article "Company recruits autistic people only", explores how "differentness" can be an asset and throws a positive light on the issue of integration of autistic people.

The special Young Journalism award (a trip worth 2500 Euro) for candidates up to 28, went to Finland's Henna Helne (28). She was honoured for her article "Mothers learning their children's language", published in *Anna* magazine. It gives a positive outlook on the integration debate while raising awareness of "multiple discrimination," in this case on the grounds of age, gender and ethnic origin.

The 2007 edition of the EU Journalist Award was launched in February, for articles published in any of the 27 member states between 1st January and 30th September 2007.

This year, for the first time, a special prize will be awarded to mark the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. Candidates can qualify for this special award by submitting an article dealing with discrimination on the basis of race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, gender, age, sexual orientation or disability and referring to the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. Articles on multiple discrimination are particularly welcome.

For more information on the award and to view the 2006 winning articles from each member state, please visit [www.stop-discrimination.info](http://www.stop-discrimination.info).

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