



Maltese journalist recognised for contribution to Diversity issues

***Ghetto of tents* by Victor Vella named best national article in EU Journalist Award 2007.**

An article about immigrants in the open centre by Victor Vella, has been selected national winner for Malta in the EU's *For Diversity. Against Discrimination* Journalist Award 2007.

The annual competition recognises work that contributes to a better understanding of the benefits of diversity and the fight against discrimination in employment. Victor Vella's article has now gone through to the European Final where an independent EU jury will decide the European winners from all the national finalists.

"For the last few months I have been interested in the living conditions of the immigrants living in open centres in Malta. The latter lives in poor sanitary conditions, without regular medical attention, and with no future prospects for a better living. Illegal immigrants are also subject to exploitation in employment. I hope that this campaign 'For Diversity. Against Discrimination', will bring to light the living and working conditions of the illegal immigrants in Malta and therefore improve them in the near future."

Since 1994, Victor Vella has been working as a journalist with Union Press' daily *I-orizzont* and weekly *it-Torca*. He contribute on various topics, including illegal immigration. This topic is of particular interest given the fact that around 1,500 illegal immigrants arrived on Maltese shores this year.

The Maltese jurors were Mr Malcolm Naudi, Ms Laura Mifsud Bonnici, Ms Pippa Zammit Cutajar, Mr Godwin Scerri and Ms Janet Mifsud. The jury selected the winner from 18 entries. The jury agreed that the article best portrays the situation which irregular migrants experience at the open centre in *Hal-Far*. It is well researched and quite balanced in it's approach. The reader also gets a vivid account of how badly these people, who find themselves trapped in Malta, are treated by employers and the exploitation they face.

On an international level, a total of 760 valid entries were considered for the award.





The European Commission honores those journalists who help to bring the public's attention to the issues of diversity and discrimination in the workplace.

"It takes courage and dedication to bring to light stories that are not always guaranteed to make the headlines," explains Commissioner Špidla. "The winning journalists have given people in Europe an insight into some of the most challenging issues facing our society today."

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