



European Ombudsman kicks off information tour of accession states with visit to Estonia

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The European Ombudsman, **P. Nikiforos Diamandouros**, will visit Estonia next week on the first leg of his information tour of the countries due to join the European Union in 2004. During his visit, the Ombudsman will meet with the Estonian President, the Prime Minister, the Legal Chancellor and will deliver a public lecture at the National Library.

In the months leading up to the enlargement of the European Union, the European Ombudsman will be visiting the ten countries due to join the EU in 2004 in order to inform citizens of their rights. According to Mr Diamandouros: *"All EU citizens who might have a complaint to make to the European Ombudsman should be informed of how to do so. The general public should know that there is a European Ombudsman and of the role he plays in ensuring that the EU institutions and bodies conform to the highest standards of administration."*

Programme

On Thursday 11 September, the Ombudsman will meet the Estonian President, Arnold Rüütel and the Prime Minister, Juhan Parts. On 12 September, he will give a public lecture entitled *"Democracy, accountability and the institution of ombudsman"*.

The European Ombudsman actively co-operates with ombudsmen and similar bodies throughout Europe in order to ensure that citizens' rights are protected. In planning his visit, Mr Diamandouros has worked closely with the Legal Chancellor of Estonia, Allar Jõks. Mr Diamandouros will meet Mr Jõks on Thursday 11 September and will hold a press conference later the same day at the Office of the Legal Chancellor. On Friday 12 September, the European Ombudsman will meet the Head of the European Commission Delegation in Estonia, John Kjaer and the Chairman of the Constitutional Committee of the Estonian Parliament, Urmas Reinsalu.

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