

Brussels, 11<sup>th</sup> February 2010

## Telecoms: Commission calls on Member States to step up awareness of Europe's single emergency number 112

*To mark European 112 Day on February 11, the European Commissioner for the Digital Agenda Neelie Kroes has written to Member States calling on them to intensify their efforts to raise awareness of Europe's single emergency number 112. While awareness has increased slightly, three out of four EU citizens still do not know they can call 112 in an emergency to contact the police, fire brigade or medical services, either from home or when travelling in the EU. Having the reflex to dial this 112 lifeline, which now works in all EU countries, could save lives and reduce injuries.*

"Digital Agenda Commissioner, Neelie Kroes said "A single European emergency number only helps if people know about it. On European 112 Day, I call on national authorities to step up and do more to inform their citizens about 112, a number that can save lives."

A recent Eurobarometer survey shows that just a quarter (25%) of EU citizens questioned could **spontaneously identify 112** as the number to call emergency services anywhere in the EU. This is only one percentage point improvement at EU level since 2009 (up from 24%). In some countries however, citizens are much more aware of 112 as the EU-wide emergency number than last year: Belgium and Slovakia (9 percentage point improvement), Slovenia (up 7 percentage points) and Poland (up 6 percentage points), Lithuania and Hungary (up 5 percentage points). In the Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Poland, Slovakia and Finland more than half of the population know about 112. However, like last year, in Italy, Greece and the UK less than 10% of citizens know about 112, the lowest awareness levels in the EU.

In 21 EU countries the European emergency number 112 appears in telephone directories and on emergency vehicles in 20 EU countries. However, only 22% of EU citizens said they have received **information** related to 112, according to the report. A majority (62%) also said they are not sufficiently informed about the EU emergency number. Many citizens also face **language problems**: one in ten people had difficulties in communicating in another language when calling 112 while abroad, even though Member States say their 112 emergency centres can handle 112 calls at least in English.

Receiving information about the **location of 112 callers** can speed up the arrival of emergency services, reduce the severity of injuries and even save lives. Call centres in 20 EU countries (compared to 9 countries in 2008) almost instantly give emergency services the location of 112 callers thanks to 'push' or near-instant 'pull' location systems. However, the Commission has taken legal action against Italy as caller location information is not yet provided to emergency services for 112 calls from mobile phones ([IP/09/1784](#)).

## Background

112 is the European emergency number, reachable from fixed and mobile phones, free of charge, everywhere in the EU. Since July 2009, citizens using their mobiles while roaming in another EU country receive an SMS with information about 112.

The reform of EU telecoms rules ([MEMO/09/568](#)) strengthened EU rules on 112, in particular for quicker provision of caller location information to emergency authorities, awareness raising (specially for travellers), extending access obligations to certain types of internet telephony (VoIP) providers and access for disabled users.

To ensure 112 is working effectively, the Commission started legal action against 14 Member States over the lack of availability of caller location; 13 are now closed following corrective measures (a case is still pending against Italy, [IP/09/1784](#)). Legal action was also launched and closed against Poland and Bulgaria concerning the availability of 112 ([IP/05/1585](#), [IP/09/163](#)), and against Italy concerning the appropriate handling of 112 calls by emergency services, where the case was recently closed ([IP/10/65](#)).

112 now works in all EU countries ([IP/08/1968](#)). While 112 works in parallel with existing national emergency numbers, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Romania and Malta have decided to make 112 their main national emergency number.

The Commission 112 website is now available in six languages (German, French, English, Spanish, Italian and Polish):

[www.ec.europa.eu/112](http://www.ec.europa.eu/112)

How 112 works in my country:

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/activities/112/ms/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/112/ms/index_en.htm)

Kids' corner (available in all 23 official EU languages):

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/activities/112/kids/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/112/kids/index_en.htm)

Flash Eurobarometer 285 "The European Emergency Number 112":

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/activities/112/docs/survey\\_2010.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/112/docs/survey_2010.pdf)

COCOM report on the implementation of 112:

[http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/info/cocom1/library?l=/public\\_documents\\_2010&vm=detailed&sb=Title](http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/info/cocom1/library?l=/public_documents_2010&vm=detailed&sb=Title)

New video to raise awareness of 112:

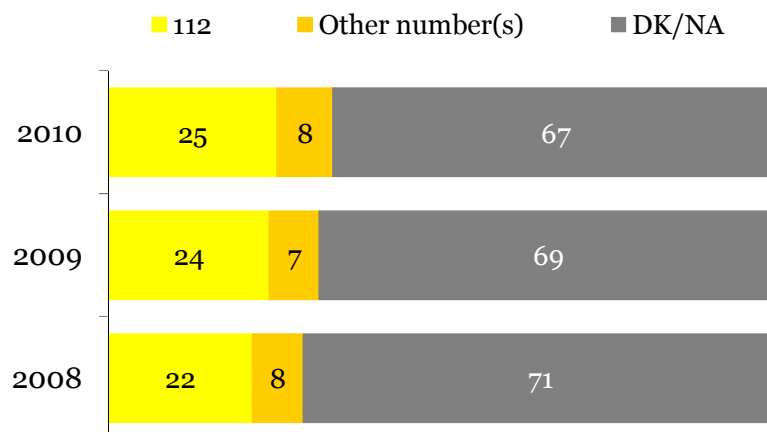
[www.ec.europa.eu/112](http://www.ec.europa.eu/112) and

[http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/video\\_prod\\_en.cfm?type=details&prodid=12592&src=1](http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/video_prod_en.cfm?type=details&prodid=12592&src=1)

See also [MEMO/10/35](#).

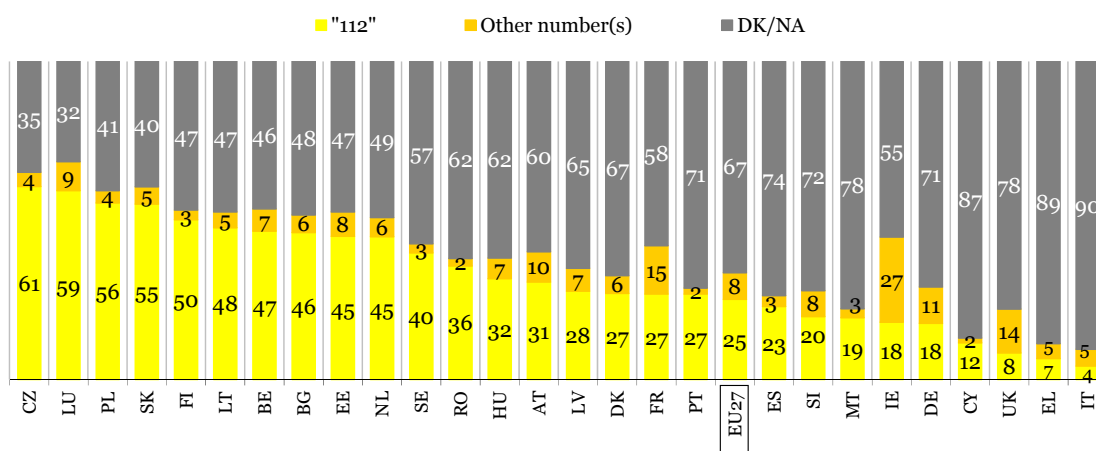
Extracts from Flash Eurobarometer 285 "The European Emergency Number 112" (February 2010).

Knowledge of 112 as the EU-wide emergency number



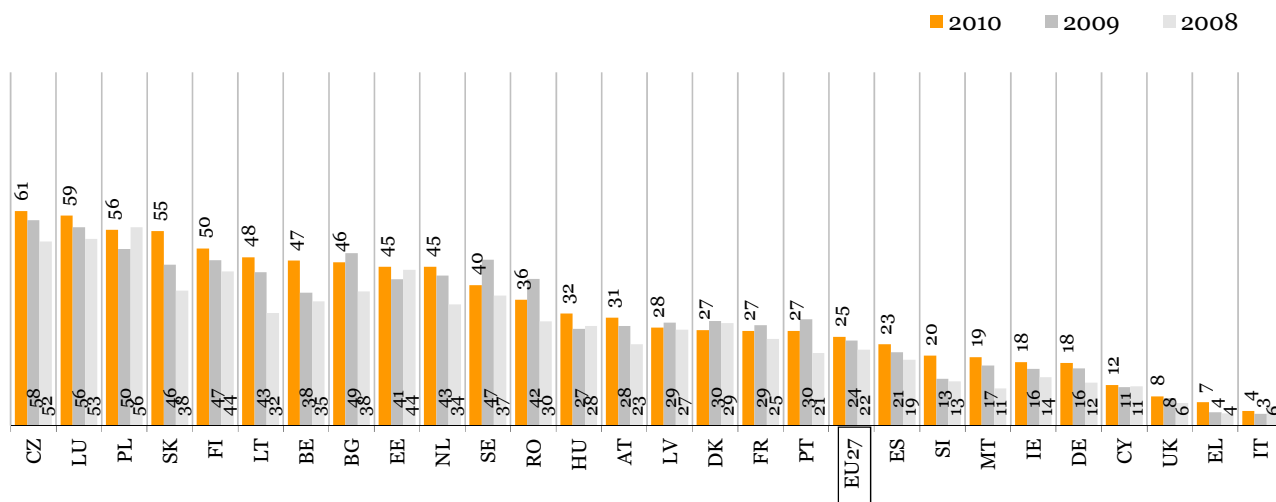
Q2. Can you tell me what telephone number enables you to call emergency services anywhere in the EU?  
 %, Base: all respondents, EU27

Knowledge of 112 as the EU-wide emergency number



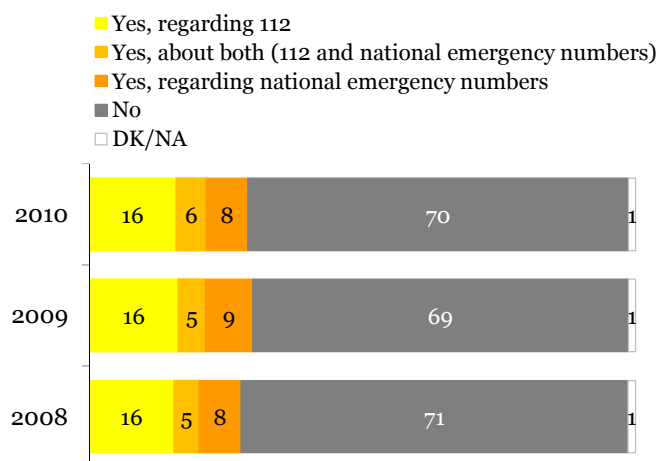
Q2. Can you tell me what telephone number enables you to call emergency services anywhere in the European Union?  
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## Knowledge of 112 as the EU-wide emergency number – 2008-2010



Q2. Can you tell me what telephone number enables you to call emergency services anywhere in the EU?  
 %, Base: all respondents, by country

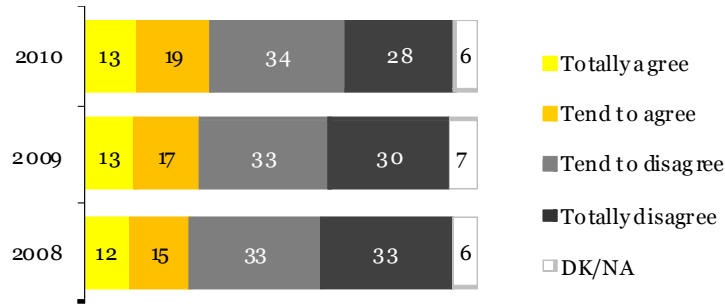
## Information about the European emergency number 112 and national emergency numbers



Q3. During the last 12 months, have you seen or heard any information regarding the European emergency number "112"? And have you seen or heard any information about the national emergency number(s)?  
 %, Base: all respondents, EU27

## Opinions about the European emergency number 112

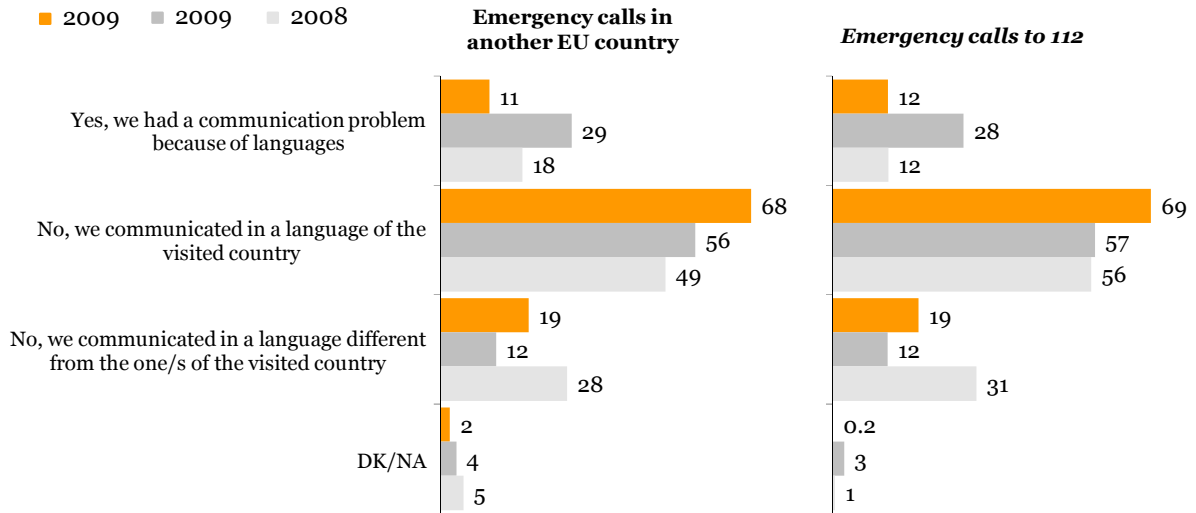
In [COUNTRY], people are adequately informed about the existence of the European emergency number 112



Q4 b. Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements...

%, Base: all respondents, EU 27

## Language barriers when making an emergency call in another EU country



Q8a. Did you experience any communication problem because of the language you used?

%, Base: those who made an emergency call in another EU country in the last 5 years