



Time to raise awareness of Europe-wide emergency number

5.00.00pm GMT Wed 11th Feb 2009

Speaking on Radio 4's 'You and Yours' programme on the European emergency number - '112' day, Diana Wallis MEP, who campaigns to raise awareness of the number, said:

"With people becoming increasingly mobile throughout the EU, this is clearly an issue which affects us all. The figures revealed by the latest research are worrying to say the least. Less than one in four citizens know the "112" number - and this falls to one in twenty for the UK, Italy and Greece.

"The written declaration I piloted through the European Parliament achieved historic support amongst fellow MEPs. The Commission has understood this and has included 112 in several recent initiatives, but Member States are still not showing the necessary enthusiasm to take this issue forward. Indeed several have even gone to court over the matter rather than making the necessary investments.

The European emergency number was introduced across the EU over 15 years ago, so it is about time national authorities and European institutions start raising awareness of it, and evaluating how appropriately 112 calls are handled in the Member States."

Note

The 112 number does not replace national emergency numbers such as the UK's 999.

112 day is celebrated on 11 February (11 / 2)

A mere 6% of British citizens can spontaneously recall the European emergency number, far below the European average (22%). This is particularly critical due to the high number of outbound tourists from the United Kingdom, which reached 16.2 million in 2003. These tourists are facing serious danger when travelling abroad as they are not aware that the number 112 could save their lives in case of an emergency.

Diana Wallis, together with Commissioner Viviane Reding, received the EENA prize for "outstanding political initiative" on 112 in 2008.

In September 2007 the European Parliament adopted a Written Declaration calling for improved implementation of the European Emergency Number, 112. The Written Declaration (number 44 of 2007) achieved the highest ever number of signatures in the history of the Parliament, gathering cross-party support from over 500 MEPs.

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/065-10135-246-09-36-911-20070906IPR10134-03-09-2007-2007-true/default_en.htm

112, the single European emergency call number, appeared in 1991 in the context of the single market and free movement of persons, with the aim of providing an additional, common means for accessing emergency services all over the Union. However, despite having been introduced in all Member States except for Bulgaria (for which an infringement procedure is pending), differences still persist in the implementation of 112. Whereas in some countries the emergency services are able to locate 112 callers and provide support in several languages, these facilities are not always certain.

Council Decision from 1991 establishing 112:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31991D0396:EN:HTML>

Commission page on 112 (Civil Protection Unit): http://ec.europa.eu/environment/civil/prote/112/112_en.

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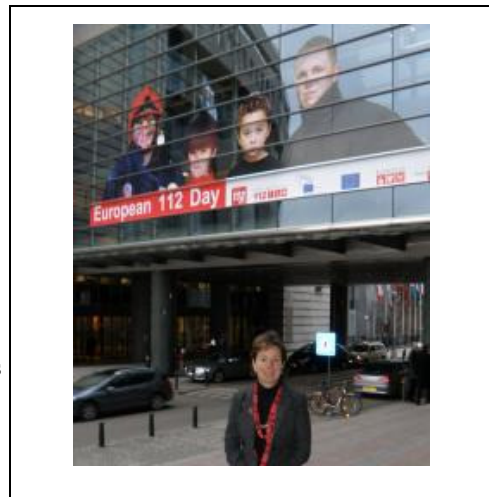
Fri 27th Apr 2007:

Euro MP launches Written Declaration in call for more effective European emergency number .

Tue 6th Feb 2007:

European Parliament launches campaign saying emergency number for all Europeans needs to be much more effective.

Tue 30th Jan 2001:



Diana Wallis MEP assists in launch of Europe-wide Financial Services Dispute Resolution Network.

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