

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0426/07
by Piia-Noora Kauppi (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Problems with European emergency call number 112

Article 26 of Directive 2002/22/EC¹ (Universal Service) states that ‘Member States shall ensure that, in addition to any other national emergency call numbers specified by the national regulatory authorities, all end-users of publicly available telephone services, including users of public pay telephones, are able to call the emergency services free of charge, by using the single European emergency call number 112’. This same article provides that ‘calls to the single European emergency call number 112 are appropriately answered and handled in a manner best suited to the national organisation of emergency systems’, that ‘undertakings which operate public telephone networks make caller location information available to authorities handling emergencies, to the extent technically feasible, for all calls to the single European emergency call number 112’ and finally that ‘citizens are adequately informed about the existence and use of the single European emergency call number 112’.

Some countries in the EU have set up some special centres to handle calls to 112 (Greece) or transmit calls to 112 to one of the centres handling emergency calls, such as fire-fighters/ambulances (Germany, Belgium, Spain) or police (Italy, Austria). The implementation of caller location in these countries for calls to 112 only, combined with a lack of information for citizens from these countries, and also for tourists visiting these countries, on the availability and use of 112 creates two categories of citizens – those who are aware of 112 and who will receive a service with location (and maybe a multilingual service) and the others who might die because they do not know which number to dial or will call the national numbers without being located.

Can the Commission provide a detailed explanation on how it plans to stop that discrimination?

¹ OJ L 108, 24.4.2002, p. 51.