

**Question for written answer E-003074/2019
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Guido Reil (ID)

Subject: Volunteer firefighters

The Commission has confirmed, in two answers given in April 2019¹, that in the light of a European Court of Justice judgment handed down in February 2018 volunteer firefighters who carry out the same work as professional firefighters fall within the scope of the Working Time Directive. The judgment and the Commission's opinion have caused consternation among volunteer firefighters in the Member States, whose emergency services could not function without volunteer fire brigades.

In 2012, the then Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities said it would be difficult to apply the Working Time Directive to volunteer firefighters and that they should be considered separately. The Commissioner called for a separate set of rules to be included in the directive to ensure that workers were protected, and, at the same time, to provide the flexibility needed to take account of the special nature of the work of fire brigades.²

To what extent does the directive take the specific nature of firefighters' work into account?

What discussions has the Commission conducted with firefighters' associations, and what pledges will be made?

Is the Commission working on a specific provision for inclusion in the directive that will take the specific nature of firefighters' work into account?