

**Press Release**

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EPP-ED MEPs in support of the 1st European 112 Day - One number for one Europe in case of emergency. Piia-Noora Kauppi MEP and Jacek Saryusz-Wolski MEP

Piia-Noora Kauppi MEP and Jacek Saryusz-Wolski MEP will take part today in the celebrations establishing the European 112 Emergency Number Day. This day, on 11 February 2008, is organised with the aim of making sure that Europeans are informed on the European emergency number 112 and that calls to this number need to be appropriately handled. 112, the single European emergency call number, appeared in 1991 in the context of the unique market and free circulation of people with the aim of providing a single access to emergency services all over the Union.

"Following the massive support of our colleagues in the European Parliament to improve knowledge of 112 and its function, it is important that the Commission and the Member States commit to the same objectives. We need to coordinate our efforts to make sure that calls to 112 are located, answered in several languages and that emergency services arrive on time at the place of the accident. We are therefore waiting for the Commission's proposals on these issues", said Mrs Kauppi and Mr Saryusz-Wolski. In some countries, emergency services are able to locate calls to 112 and provide an answer in several languages, whereas some others still do not implement any location and multilingual systems.

Commenting on being 112 Champion MEPs, Mrs Kauppi said: "The Universal Service Directive provides for the obligation of Member States to 'ensure that calls to the single European emergency call number 112 are appropriately answered and handled ...'. In Finland, we have standards for the maximal intervention time of emergency services, for multilingual support of answering calls and our operators follow an intensive one year training course to be able to cope with their stressful job. I hear that in other countries this is not the case. This clearly means that Finnish people and their Scandinavian neighbours who apply similar standards are less well protected when visiting some of the other EU states. This is unacceptable by all means and the Commission should certainly do something about it."

Mr Saryusz-Wolski added: "The 112 emergency number represents to me the essence of the idea of the European Union - full integration and unity. Every single citizen can dial this number in case of emergency in every single EU Member State and receive assistance. In my home town, for example, just recently, a 4 year-old boy saved his mother's life by dialling this number. I am very proud that thanks to this initiative the EU can serve its citizens better and make us all feel equally well protected both at home and abroad."

Both members will take part in the press conference which will take place in the European Parliament on Monday 11 February at 10.30 hrs in room PHS0A50.

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