

Intervention Meet Your MEP
Carlos Coelho on 112

Brussels, 18/10/2017

Dear President Antonio Tajani

Dear President of EENA, Mr. Demetrios Pырros

Dear Representatives from emergency services and public authorities from all the Member States

Dear colleagues and friends

It's a great honour to host, together with colleagues from all the political parties, the second edition of the '*meet your MEP event*'. This is a unique occasion for EENA Members to inform and discuss with the Members of the European Parliament about challenges they face in their work.

Effective emergency response is vital to ensure the safety and well-being of European citizens. The often challenging situations in which professionals in the field of emergency response have to work have recently – again – been highlighted in fighting the wild fires in Portugal in Spain.

These challenging times remind us that the internal market is more than just successful economic cooperation within the EU.

Well-functioning emergency services are a vital elements in completing our internal market. We have gained experience in overcoming differences in the trading in goods, services, capital and borderless travel for EU citizens. We should use this experience to now overcome the hurdles professionals in the emergency field face on a daily basis. This requires closer cooperation, making optimal use of digital developments and raising awareness.

Today's event brings together emergency service professionals and their MEPs and I am convinced that the exchanges we are having today is contributing to tackling challenges and raise awareness towards everyone on the importance of 112.

I am grateful to all of you for joining us here today. But I would like to especially welcome the guest at two tables:

- 1- The victims from terrorist attacks in France and Belgium
- 2- The representatives from Fire Safe Europe association.

Ladies and Gentleman,

We have a collective obligation to save lives, this counts especially for politicians.

The emergency number exists for 25 years so it's shocking that more than half of the EU citizens remain relatively unfamiliar with the European emergency number 112. We need to reverse this status quo and help to increase awareness, usage and functioning.

I am very optimistic about new ways in which emergency services can connect with people:

- The eCall system in cars, which automatically dial 112 in the case of a car crash, significantly reduces response times.
- The use of drones can bring many opportunities for quicker emergency response.
- The use of Advanced Mobile Location that allows the phone, after an emergency call to 112, to automatically send a message with the coordinates of the caller to the emergency service
- Changes on the facades of buildings are just examples.

To conclude I would like to congratulate you all for the magnificent and brave work that you have been doing every day and wish you a pleasant morning of discussions with the Members of European Parliament.

Before opening the event I would like to thank colleagues from the European Number Emergency Association, in the person of Gary Machado and the entire team, whom together with my assistant Pedro Paulos e Cruz, have put together today's event. For many year I had the pleasure to work together with EENA on the promotion of the 112. A huge thank you!

Finally I would like to propose a minute of silence in honour of the recent victims of wild fires in Portugal and Spain. It's these tragedies that remind us that we must work harder so that their lives were not taken in vain but to help us to make European Union safer. #MakeEUSafer.