

The European Emergency Number 112

Summary *Wave 4*

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This survey was requested by Directorate-General for Information Society and Media and coordinated by Directorate-General Communication

This document does not represent the point of view of the European Commission. The interpretations and opinions contained in it are solely those of the authors.

Flash Eurobarometer Series
#314

The European Emergency Number 112

Survey conducted by The Gallup Organization
Hungary upon the request of Directorate-
General for Information Society and Media



Coordinated by Directorate-General
Communication

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THE GALLUP ORGANIZATION

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Introduction

The single European emergency number 112 was introduced to enable citizens to call the emergency services (i.e. police, fire and ambulance) by using the same number from anywhere in the EU¹. Since the end of 2008, all EU Member States have ensured that anyone can call the emergency services from fixed and mobile phones by using the 112 number.

National differences in the availability of emergency numbers

Before 112 became the European emergency number, it had already served for several decades as an emergency number in some EU Member States; for example, for the German fire brigade and for the Italian police forces. Nevertheless, for most Member States, 112 was a new emergency number and its introduction led to different situations in the various Member States, as follows:

a) 112 is the sole/main emergency number

In some Member States, 112 has become the main national emergency number, promoted as the number to contact all emergency services (i.e. police, fire and ambulance). Countries where this is the case include Denmark, the Netherlands and Romania. However, some other prior (legacy)² national numbers may still link callers to the emergency services.

b) 112 operates alongside other emergency numbers

Most Member States, however, have decided to introduce 112 as a number that will work alongside their national emergency numbers. Both 112 and such national numbers are presented as numbers to call in order to contact some or all emergency services. In the UK, for example, citizens can either call 112 or the national number 999 in the case of an emergency.

Purpose of the Flash Eurobarometer survey on “The European Emergency Number 112”

This Flash Eurobarometer survey on “The European Emergency Number 112” (N°314), requested by the Directorate-General for Information Society and Media is part of a trend survey. The results of previous waves were published in 2008, 2009 and 2010. Although the current survey builds on these earlier surveys, the questionnaire has been re-designed.

The report deals with the following aspects relating to the European emergency number 112:

- opinions about the usefulness, access and promotion of that number,
- EU citizens’ knowledge of the European emergency number 112,
- usage of the European emergency number 112 (vs. usage of other national emergency numbers).

Methodological note on the survey

The survey’s fieldwork was carried out between 3 and 7 January 2011. Over 40,500 randomly selected EU citizens, aged 15 years and above, were interviewed in the EU’s 27 Member States. Interviews were predominantly carried out via fixed-line telephones, with approximately 1,500 in each of the Member States. To correct sampling disparities, a post-stratification weighting of the results was implemented, based on important socio-demographic variables.

¹ Council Decision of July 29, 1991 (91/396/EEC) and Universal Service Directive of March 7, 2002 (Directive 2002/22/EC), amended by Directive 2009/136/EC, of 25 November 2009.

² It is assumed that these “prior” (legacy) emergency numbers are no longer publicly advertised for that purpose but are only kept in operation for reasons of public safety.

Main findings

Usefulness of the European emergency number 112

- More than 9 in 10 (96%) EU citizens thought that it was very useful to have a European emergency number available throughout the EU (83% *totally agreed* and 13% *tended to agree*). Almost 9 in 10 (87%) interviewees also agreed that their country's authorities should do more to make it easier for disabled users to contact the emergency services by calling 112 (66% *totally agreed* and 21% *tended to agree*).
- The proportion of respondents who *totally agreed* with the statement about the usefulness of the EU-wide emergency number ranged from 69% in the UK to 97% in Malta. The proportion of respondents who *totally agreed* with the statement about access to the European emergency number 112 for disabled users ranged from 45% in Denmark to 94% in Cyprus.
- Comparing the current results to those of 2010, respondents were now more likely to *totally agree*, rather than *tend to agree*, with the statements as described above. Lithuania has seen the largest increase, from 2010 to 2011, in the proportion of respondents who *totally agreed* that having an EU-wide emergency number was very useful (+15 percentage points). For the statement about “access to 112 for disabled users”, Bulgaria joined Lithuania in having seen the largest increase in the proportion expressing strong agreement (both +16 points).

Information about the European emergency number 112

- Just over a third of EU citizens agreed that people in their country were adequately informed about the existence of the European emergency number 112 (15% *totally agreed* and 20% *tended to agree*). Agreement with this statement has gradually increased from 27% in 2008 to 35% in 2011 (+8 percentage points).
- As in 2010, Luxembourg (70%), the Czech Republic (68%), Romania (64%) and Slovakia (59%) had majorities of respondents thinking that the available information about 112 was adequate. In 2011, these countries have been joined by Poland (54%) and Finland (52%).
- A comparison across the four waves showed that, in more than half of the EU countries, the current level of agreement was the highest measured since the first wave of this survey in 2008. The proportion of interviewees who agreed that people in their country were adequately informed about the European emergency number has increased by at least 19 percentage points in Bulgaria (from 21% in 2008 to 46% in 2011; +25 percentage points), Slovakia (from 36% to 59%; +23 points), Lithuania (from 28% to 50%; +22 points) and Romania (from 45% to 64%; +19 points).
- Slightly more than a quarter (27%) of EU citizens said they had heard about or seen information regarding the European emergency number 112 in their country during the past 12 months. Furthermore, among respondents who had travelled to another EU country during this time frame, 17% said they had received information about the possibility of using the 112 number in that country.
- While two-thirds of respondents in Slovakia (68%) and a slim majority of those in Finland, the Czech Republic, Romania and Lithuania (51%-56%) said they had received information about the European emergency number 112 in the past 12 months *in their country*, this proportion was just 8% in Italy and 10% in the UK.
- Of those who have seen/heard about the European emergency number 112 in their country, a large majority named media outlets as their source of information; they had learned about the 112 number by watching television (61%), reading newspapers (23%), listening to the radio (16%) or surfing the Internet (11%).

Knowledge of the European emergency number 112

- The current survey results showed that EU citizens remained relatively unfamiliar with the European emergency number 112: only about a quarter (26%) of respondents could spontaneously identify 112 as the number to call for emergency services from anywhere in the EU. Awareness of 112 as an EU-wide emergency number has slowly increased from 22% in 2008 to this current figure in 2011 (+4 percentage points).
- In five countries, a majority of respondents spontaneously identified 112 as the number to call for emergency services from anywhere in the EU: Luxembourg (63%), the Czech Republic (59%), Slovakia (57%), Finland (56%) and Poland (54%).
- As in previous waves, respondents in Greece (6%), Italy (7%), the UK (8%) and Cyprus (9%) were the least likely to be aware of 112's EU-wide functionality.
- In three countries, knowledge of 112 as the European emergency number has increased by at least five percentage points from 2010 to 2011: Austria (from 31% to 39%; +8 points), Finland (from 50% to 56%; +6 points) and the Netherlands (from 45% to 50%; +5 points).
- Respondents who knew that 112 was a national emergency number to call for urgent situations *in their own country* did not necessarily know that this number was the European emergency number to call from anywhere in the EU. As in 2010, just 4 in 10 respondents who would call 112 in the event of an emergency in their own country also knew that this number could be used in all other EU countries.
- There was a strong correlation at a country level between the proportion of respondents who knew that 112 could be used to reach the emergency services from anywhere in the EU and the proportion who had received information about the EU-wide emergency number.

Usage of the European emergency number 112

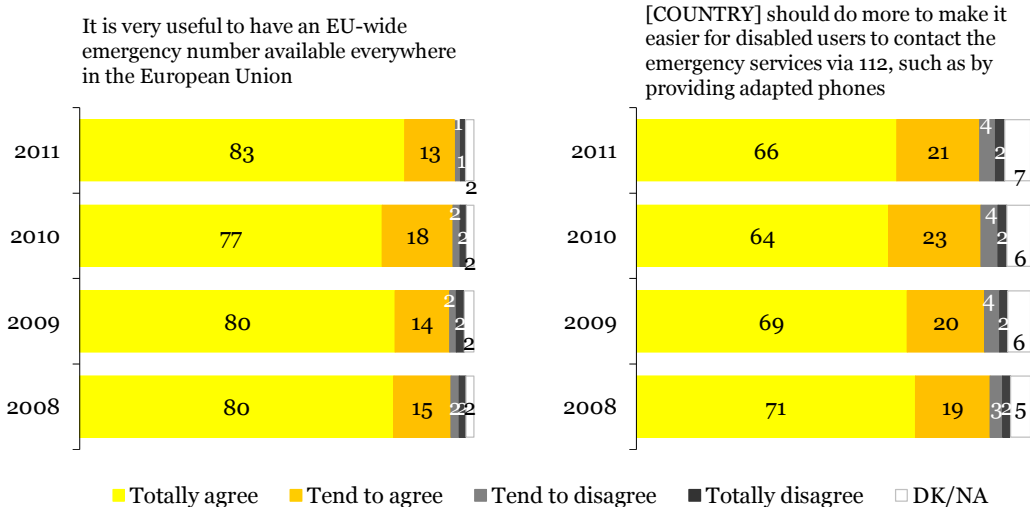
- A sixth of EU citizens reported that they had called an emergency number in the past 12 months. The proportion of respondents who had called an emergency service during that time frame ranged from less than a tenth in Malta and Slovenia (8%-9%) to more than a quarter in Latvia and Estonia (26%-27%).
- In countries where 112 operates alongside other national emergency numbers, the proportion of respondents who had called the EU-wide emergency number 112 during an emergency situation in their own country in the past 12 months was somewhat lower than the proportion who had called a national emergency number (7% and 10%, respectively). Furthermore, in this group of countries, the proportion of respondents who had called the 112 number was the highest in Luxembourg (84%); in the UK and France, however, less than 10% of respondents had called this number.
- In all countries where 112 was the sole/main emergency number, a large majority of interviewees had called this number during an emergency situation in the past 12 months (from 77% in Portugal and Denmark to 95% in Romania).

1. Usefulness of the European emergency number 112

More than 9 in 10 (96%) EU citizens agreed that it was **very useful to have a European emergency number available throughout the EU**: 83% *totally agreed* that it was very useful to have such a number, while 13% *tended to agree*. Very few respondents were sceptical about the advantages of an EU-wide emergency number (2% either *tended to disagree* or *totally disagreed*).

The overall level of agreement (i.e. the sum of *totally agree* and *tend to agree* responses) for the statement that having a European emergency number was very useful ranged from 89% in Latvia to 99% in Finland. The proportion of respondents who were sceptical about the usefulness of having such a number (i.e. they *disagreed* with the statement) remained below 5% in all countries except Latvia and the UK.

Opinions about the European emergency number 112



Q6 a/c (2011)/Q4 a/c (2010-2008). Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements...
%, Base: all respondents, EU27

Almost 9 in 10 (87%) EU citizens also agreed that that their country’s **authorities should do more to make it easier for disabled users to contact the emergency services by calling 112**, for example by providing specially-adapted phone (66% *totally agreed* and 21% *tended to agree*). About 1 in 20 (6%) respondents disagreed with this proposition.

In all EU countries, two-thirds – or more – interviewees *totally agreed* or *tended to agree* that their country should do more to make it easier for individuals with a disability to contact the emergency services via the 112 number; the total level of agreement ranged from 67% in Denmark to 98% in Cyprus.

Comparing the current results to those of 2010, respondents were now more likely to *totally agree*, rather than *tend to agree*, with the statements as described above. Lithuania has seen the largest increase, from 2010 to 2011, in the proportion of respondents who *totally agreed* that having an EU-wide emergency number was very useful (+15 points). For the statement about “access to 112 for disabled users”, Bulgaria joined Lithuania in having seen the largest increase in the proportion expressing strong agreement (both +16 points).

2. Information about the European emergency number 112

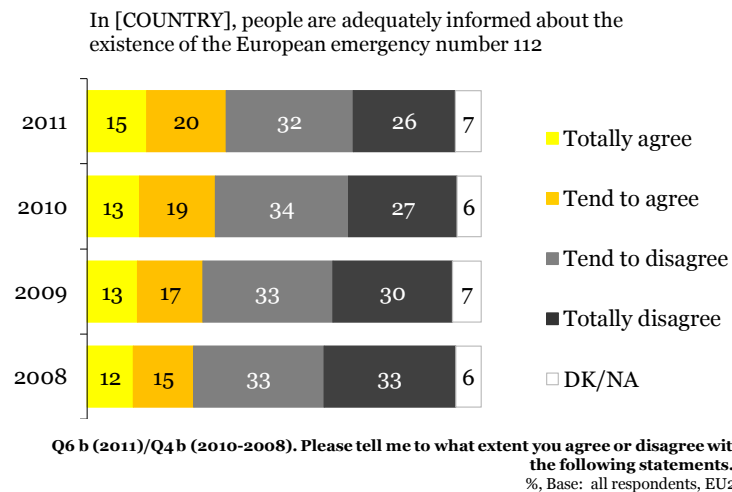
According to EU legislation, it is the responsibility of individual Member States to inform citizens about the existence and usage of the European emergency number 112. Moreover, as from July 2009, telecommunications providers have been obliged to send a text message with information about 112 to people using their mobile phones when they visit another EU country.³

2.1 Adequacy of information about the European emergency number 112

Just over a third (35%) of EU citizens agreed that people in their country were adequately informed about the existence of the European emergency number 112 (15% *totally agreed* and 20% *tended to agree*). Nonetheless, there was still a majority of interviewees (58%) who disagreed that people in their country were adequately informed about the existence of 112.

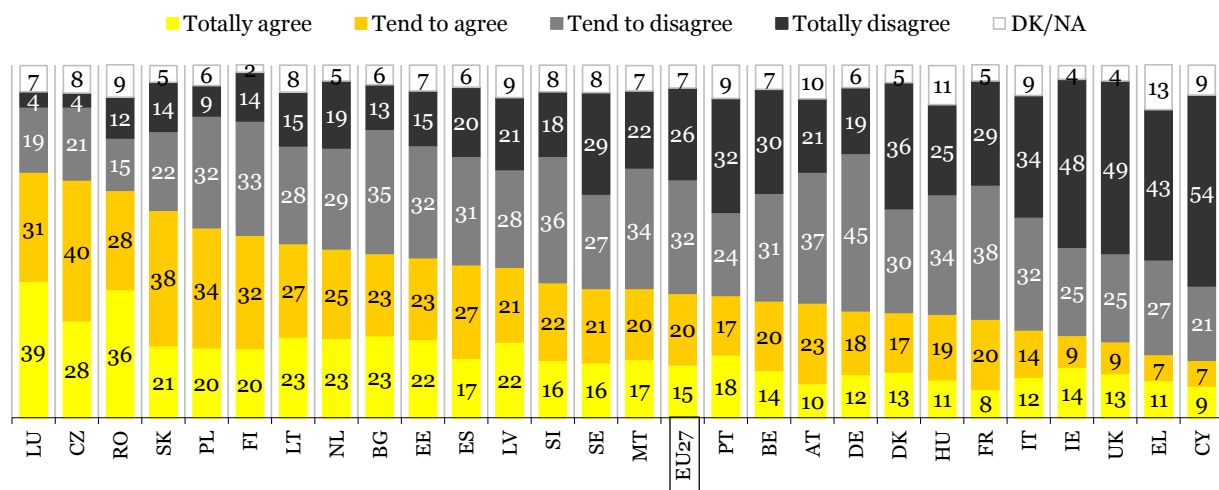
Individual country results showed a large variation in the proportions of respondents who agreed that people in their country were adequately informed about the European emergency number 112. Luxembourgish respondents (70%) were the most likely to *totally agree* or *tend to agree* with the statement that information about the 112 number was adequate. In a further five countries, a majority of respondents agreed with this statement: the Czech Republic (68%), Romania (64%), Slovakia (59%), Poland (54%) and Finland (52%).

Opinions about the European emergency number 112



Opinions about the European emergency number 112:

In [COUNTRY], people are adequately informed about the existence of the European emergency number 112



At the EU level, agreement with the statement that information about the 112 number was adequate has gradually increased from 27% in 2008 to 35% in 2011 (+8 points). An increasing trend in the level

³ Regulation (EC) No 544/2009 of the European Parliament and the Council of 18 June 2009

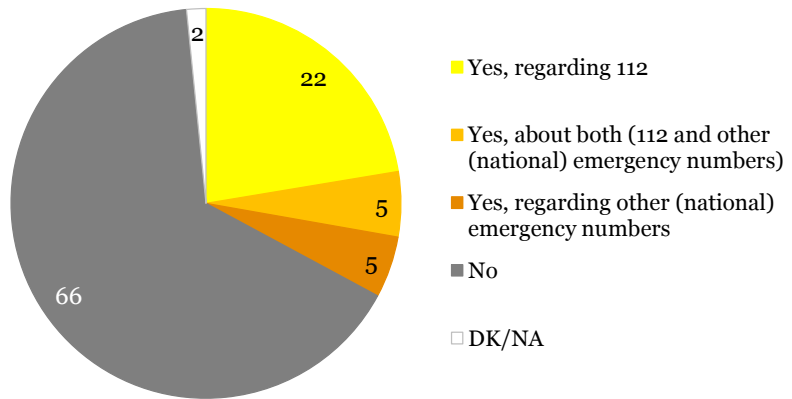
of agreement was also seen in many individual country results; furthermore, in more than half of the countries, the current level of agreement was the highest measured since the first wave of this survey.

2.2 Receiving information about the European emergency number 112

Despite the fact that individual Member States are obliged to inform their citizens about the existence of the European emergency number 112, this survey showed that 71% of EU citizens had not heard about the 112 number *in their country* during the 12 months prior to the survey.

Slightly more than a quarter (27%) of interviewees said they had received information or had heard about the European emergency number 112 in their country in the past 12 months: 22% had received information about 112 and an additional 5% had been informed about this EU-wide number and other national emergency numbers.

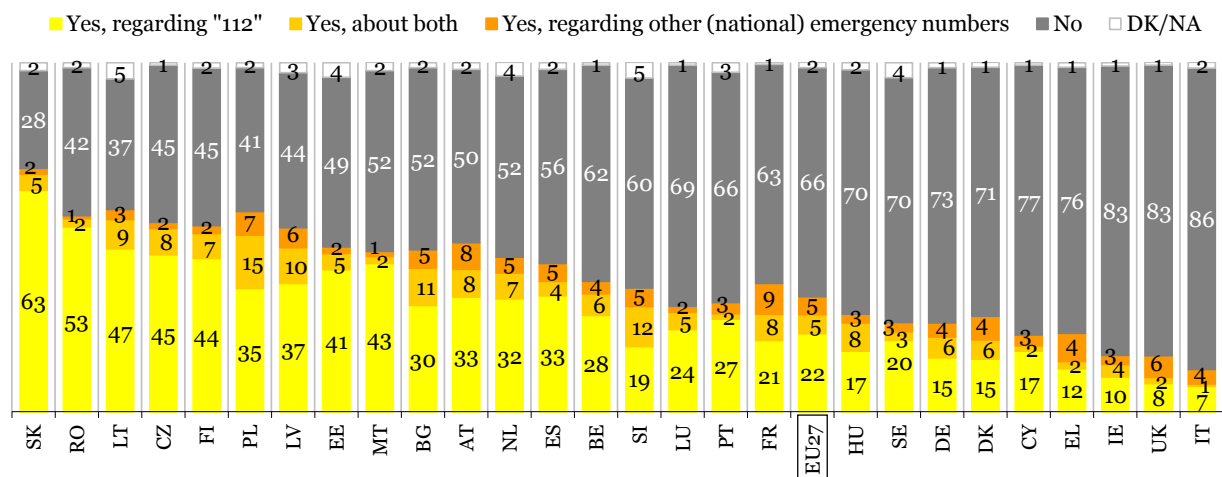
Information about the European emergency number 112 and other (national) emergency numbers



Q4A. During the last 12 months, have you seen or heard any information regarding the European emergency number “112” in [COUNTRY]? And have you seen or heard any information about other emergency number(s) in [COUNTRY]?
%, Base: all respondents, EU27

Once again, large variations were observed between EU countries in the proportion of respondents who said they had received information about the European emergency number 112 *in their country*. While more than two-thirds of respondents in Slovakia (68%) and a slim majority of those in Finland, the Czech Republic, Romania and Lithuania (51%-56%) said they had received information about this number in the past 12 months in their country, this proportion was just 10% in the UK and 8% in Italy. Nonetheless, in all countries, respondents were more likely to have received information about the European emergency number than they were about national emergency numbers.

Information about the European number 112 and other (national) emergency numbers



Q4A. During the last 12 months, have you seen or heard any information regarding the European emergency number “112” in [COUNTRY]? And have you seen or heard any information about other emergency number(s) in [COUNTRY]?
%, Base: all respondents, by country

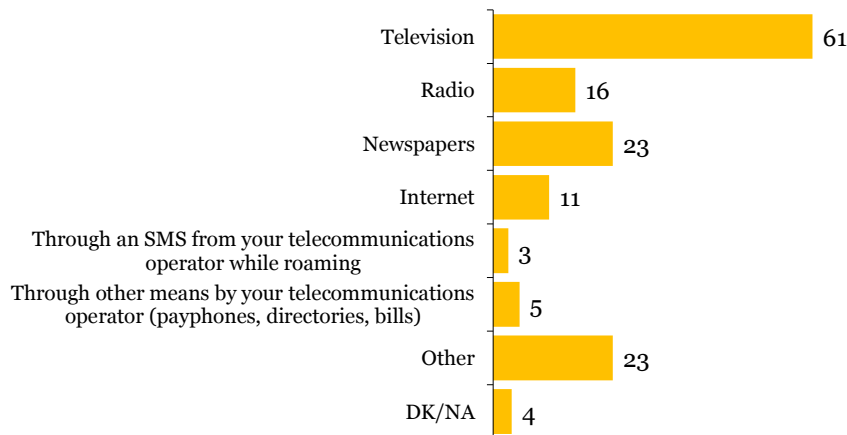
Certain socio-demographic groups were somewhat more likely than their counterparts to say that they had received information or had heard about the European emergency number 112 *in their country* in the past 12 months. The highest rates of such answers were seen among metropolitan residents,

employees and 25-39 year-olds (31%-32%, vs. an EU average of 27%). These three groups were followed by the self-employed (30% vs. 26% of inactive respondents), 15-24 year-olds (29% vs. 25% of the over 54 year-olds) and men (29% vs. 27% of women).

2.3 Information sources about the European emergency number 112

Most EU citizens, who had been informed about the 112 number *in their country*, said that this had been via a **media outlet** – by watching television (61%), reading newspapers (23%), listening to the radio (16%) or surfing the Internet (11%).

Source of information regarding the European emergency number 112



Q4B. Where did you see/hear information regarding the European emergency number “112”?
%, Base: those who have seen/heard information regarding the European emergency number 112, EU27

A minority (5%) of interviewees said that they had been informed about the European emergency number 112 by their telecommunications provider; for example, they saw the number when using a payphone or read information about 112 on a telephone bill. In all but two countries, less than 10% of respondents said they had received information about the EU-wide emergency number from a **telecommunications provider**. In Finland, 12% of respondents named this source; the corresponding proportion for Hungary was 10%.

A smaller number of respondents (3%) said they had received a text message with information about this number while “roaming”. The proportion of respondents who said they had received a **text message** with information about the 112 number while “roaming” remained below 5% in almost all countries. The most important exception was Greece with 15% of respondents saying they had received a text message with information about this number.

Other sources of information were mentioned by 23% of respondents. The proportion of respondents selecting a source of other than media or a telecommunications provider ranged from 6% in Italy to 44% in Sweden.

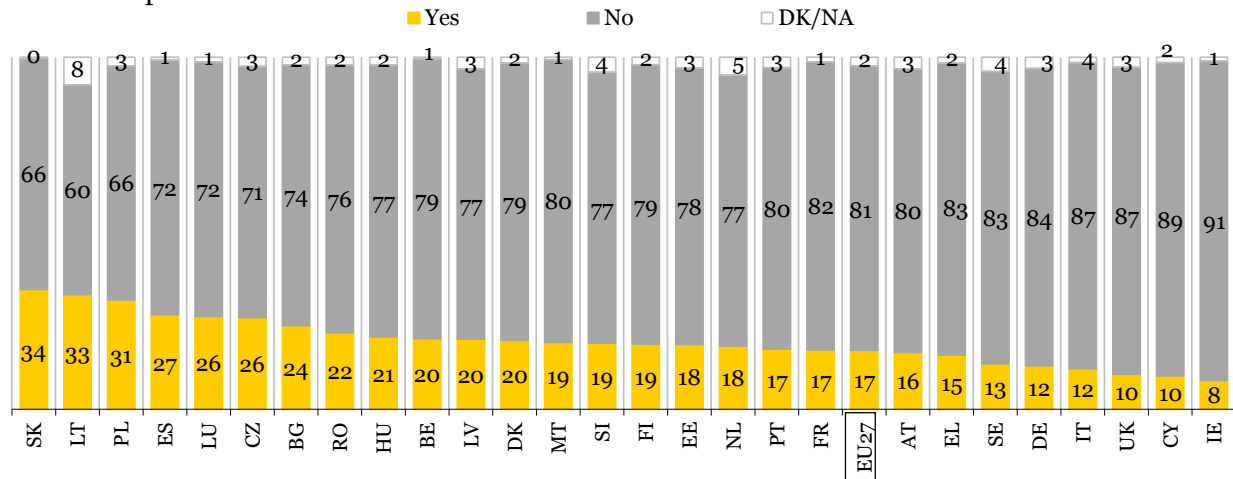
2.4 Information about 112 received when travelling in another EU country

Focusing solely on respondents who had travelled to another EU country in the past 12 months, 17% said they had received information about the possibility of using the European emergency number 112 in this country, while 81% had not received such information.

The proportion who said they had received advice about the possibility of using the European emergency number in this country ranged from not more than a tenth in Ireland, Cyprus and the UK (8%-10%) to more than 3 in 10 respondents in Poland, Lithuania and Slovakia (31%-34%).

Advice on emergency number “112” received when in other EU countries

Base: respondents who had travelled abroad



Q5. If you were traveling in other EU country/countries in the last 12 months, were you informed about the possibility to use the emergency number '112' in that EU country/countries?
%, Base: those who had travelled in another EU country in the last 12 months, by country

Members of certain socio-demographic groups were somewhat more likely than their counterparts to say that they had received information about the European emergency number 112 *when visiting another EU country*; these variations, across socio-demographic groups, were similar to those described in regard to the general question about information received by respondents. For example, focusing solely on respondents who had travelled to another EU country in the past 12 months, it was noted that 19% of 25-39 year-olds had received information about the use of the 112 number during that visit, this proportion decreased to 15% for the over 54 year-olds.

3. Knowledge of the European emergency number 112

As in previous waves, in order to examine how aware EU citizens were of the existence of the European emergency number 112, respondents were asked, firstly, to identify the telephone number they would call in the event of an emergency in their own country (e.g. if someone needed urgent medical assistance or in case they needed to contact the police or fire brigade) and, secondly, to specify the telephone number that enabled them to call emergency services anywhere in the EU.

3.1 Calling the emergency services from within one's own country

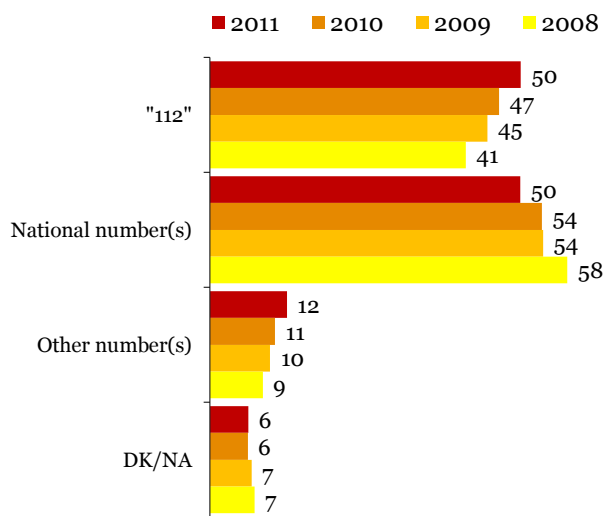
Half of EU citizens said they would call the European emergency number 112 in case of an emergency in their own country; awareness of 112 as a number to call in a national context has gradually increased since the first wave of the survey, from 41% in 2008 to 50% in 2011. Conversely, the proportion of EU citizens who said they would call a national emergency number has decreased from 58% in 2008 to 50% in 2011.

As in previous years, the proportion of respondents who would call the emergency number 112 when facing an emergency situation in their country varied a great deal between different EU countries (from 4% in Greece to 96% in the Netherlands, Finland and Sweden). This variation is partly caused by differences across countries in terms of available emergency numbers. The proportions of interviewees who answered they would call 112 in the event of an emergency in their own country were higher in countries where 112 was the sole/main emergency number (such as the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark and Finland)⁴ and in countries where 112 was the only number for contacting certain emergency services (Estonia, Luxembourg, Slovenia and Germany).

As in previous years, knowledge of 112 as the number to use in case of emergencies in a national context was the lowest in Greece (4%), the UK (9%), Cyprus (12%), France (14%) and Ireland (19%).

Compared to previous waves, in many countries, respondents were now more likely to say that they would call the emergency number 112 when confronted with an emergency situation in their own country. Lithuania has seen the largest increase in the proportion of respondents who would call the 112 number: 79% in 2011 compared to 63% in 2010 (+16 percentage points). The proportion of interviewees who thought of calling the emergency number 112 when confronted with an emergency situation in their own country has also increased by at least 10 percentage points in Bulgaria (from 52% in 2010 to 66% in 2011; +14 percentage points), Latvia (from 59% to 69%; +10 points), Belgium (from 27% to 39%; +12 points) and Austria (from 11% to 21%; +10 points).

Telephone number(s) to call in the event of emergencies in one's own country

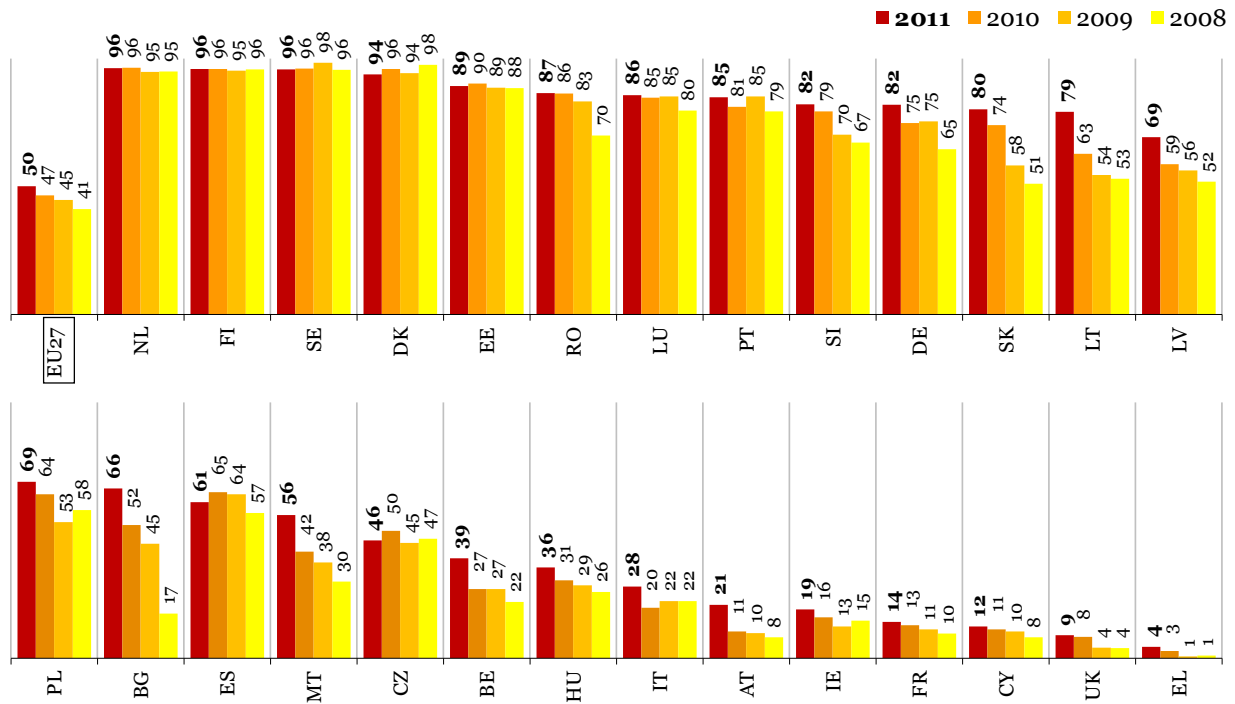


Q1. Can you tell me what telephone number you would call in the event of an emergency in [COUNTRY]?
%, Base: all respondents, EU27

⁴ Countries where 112 was the sole/main emergency number:

2008: Denmark, Finland, Sweden, the Netherlands and Portugal; 2009: +Romania; 2010: +Malta

Calling “112” in the event of emergencies in one’s own country – 2008-2011



Q1. Can you tell me what telephone number you would call in the event of an emergency in [COUNTRY]?
%, Base: all respondents, by country

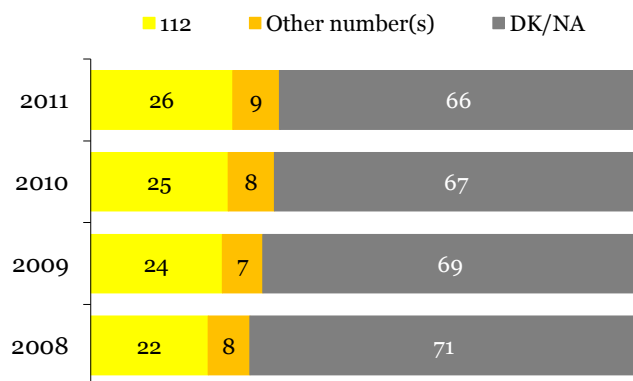
3.2 Calling the emergency services from another EU country

Although one in two respondents thought of calling the 112 number in case of an emergency in their own country, only half as many (26%) spontaneously identified 112 as the number to call for emergency services from anywhere in the EU. Nonetheless, awareness of the EU-wide functionality of 112 has increased from 22% in 2008 to 26% in 2011 (+4 percentage points).

Knowledge of 112 as the European emergency number varied considerably between the different EU countries. In five countries, a majority of respondents spontaneously identified 112 as the number to call for emergency services from anywhere in the EU: Luxembourg (63%), the Czech Republic (59%), Slovakia (57%), Finland (56%) and Poland (54%). In sharp contrast, in Greece (6%), Italy (7%), the UK (8%) and Cyprus (9%), less than a tenth of respondents knew that they could reach emergency services from anywhere in the EU by calling the European emergency number 112.

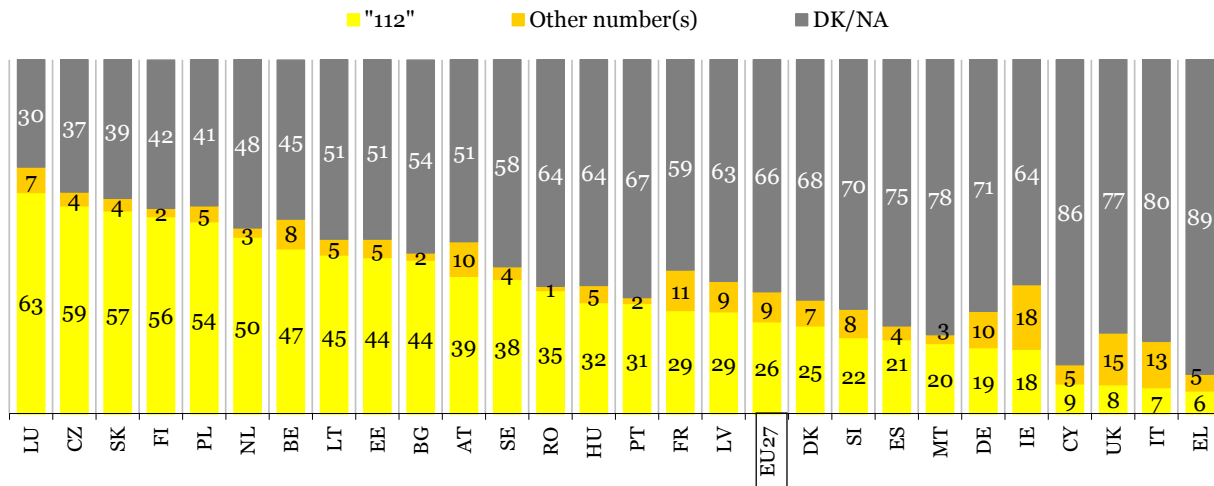
The proportions of respondents who gave a number other than 112 as the one that would enable them to call emergency services from anywhere in the EU were the highest in Ireland (18%), the UK (15%) and Italy (13%).

Knowledge of 112 as the EU-wide emergency number



Q2. Can you tell me what telephone number enables you to call emergency services anywhere in the EU?
%, Base: all respondents, EU27

Knowledge of 112 as the EU-wide emergency number



Q2. Can you tell me what telephone number enables you to call emergency services anywhere in the European Union?
%, Base: all respondents, by country

In three countries, knowledge of the EU-wide functionality of 112 has increased by at least five percentage points, from 2010 to 2011. In 2010, 31% of Austrians knew that they could reach emergency services from anywhere in the EU by calling the European emergency number 112; in the current survey, this proportion has increased to 39% (+8 percentage points). Similar progress in increasing the awareness of 112 as the European emergency number was also seen in Finland (from 50% in 2010 to 56% in 2011; +6 points) and the Netherlands (from 45% to 50%; +5 points).

Going further back, to 2008, Slovakia joined Austria and the Netherlands in having made the most progress in increasing the awareness of 112 as the European emergency number (from 38% in 2008 to 57% in 2010; +19 percentage points). In total, in eight countries, knowledge of the 112 number has increased by at least 10 percentage points from 2008 to 2011.

Respondents who knew that 112 was a national emergency number to call for urgent situations *in their own country* did not necessarily know that this number was the European emergency number to call from anywhere in the EU. Just 4 in 10 respondents who would call 112 in the event of an emergency in their own country also knew that this number could be used in all other EU countries.

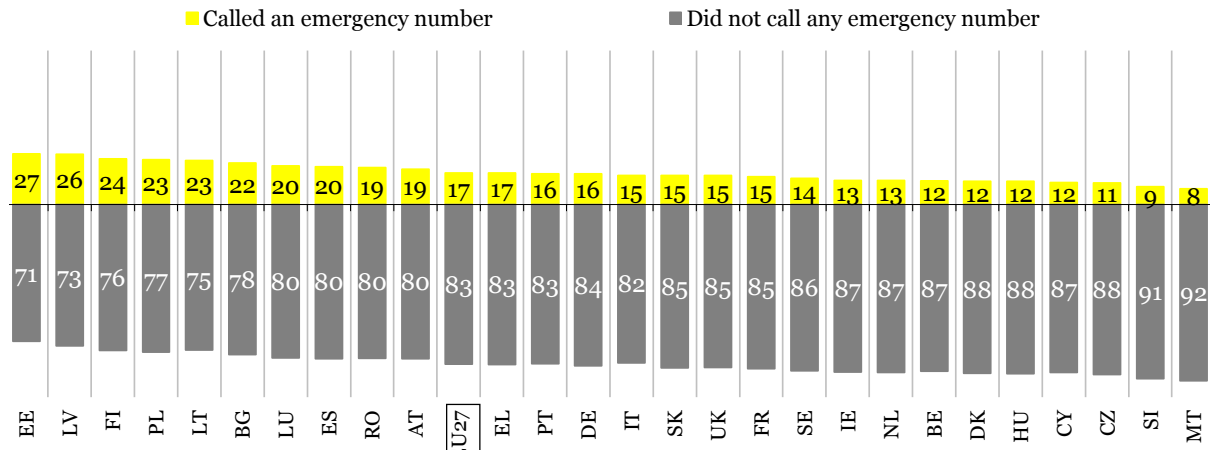
As in previous years, in most countries, where respondents were very likely to say they had received information about the European emergency number 112 in the past 12 months, the knowledge of the number was above the EU average. In addition, in most countries where respondents were very unlikely to have received information about the European emergency number, the level of knowledge of 112 as the European emergency number was low. The correlation coefficient for the relationship between the proportion of respondents who knew that 112 enabled them to call emergency services from anywhere in the EU and the proportion of those who had received information about the EU-wide emergency number, in each EU country, was equal to .72 – i.e. a strong correlation between the two variables at a country level.

Socio-demographic groups that were more likely to know that 112 enabled them to call for help in the event of an emergency from anywhere in the EU were men (30% vs. 22% of women), 15-39 year-olds (34%-36% vs. 17% of over 54 year-olds), respondents without an impairment (27% vs. 19% of respondents with an impairment), metropolitan residents (30% vs. 25% of respondents in urban and rural areas) and employees (31% vs. 21% of inactive respondents; the corresponding proportion for manual workers and the self-employed was 28%).

4. Usage of the European emergency number 112

A sixth (17%) of EU citizens reported having called an emergency number in the past 12 months. The proportion of respondents who had called an emergency service during that time frame ranged from less than a tenth in Malta and Slovenia (8%-9%) to more than a quarter in Latvia and Estonia (26%-27%).

Proportion of respondents who called an emergency number in the past 12 months



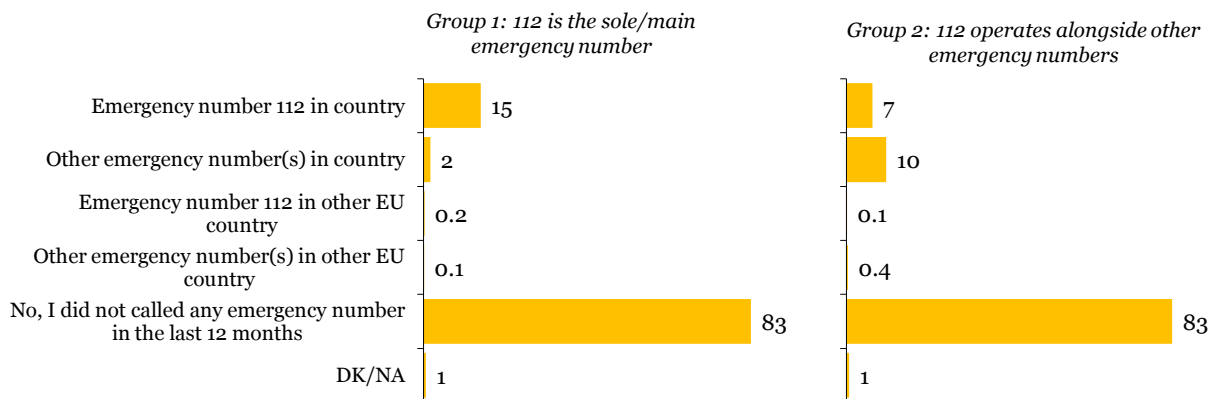
Q3. If you called any emergency number during the last 12 months, was this call made...?
%, Base: all respondents, by country

4.1 Usage of 112 vs. usage of national emergency numbers

In countries where 112 was the sole/main emergency number, 15% of respondents had called this number when needing assistance in their own country, while 2% had called another emergency number.

In countries where 112 was operating alongside other national emergency numbers, the proportion of respondents who had called the EU-wide emergency number 112 during an emergency situation in their own country was somewhat lower than the proportion who had called a national emergency number (7% vs. 10%).

Proportion of EU citizens who called an emergency number in the past 12 months



Q3. If you called any emergency number during the last 12 months, was this call made...?
%, EU27

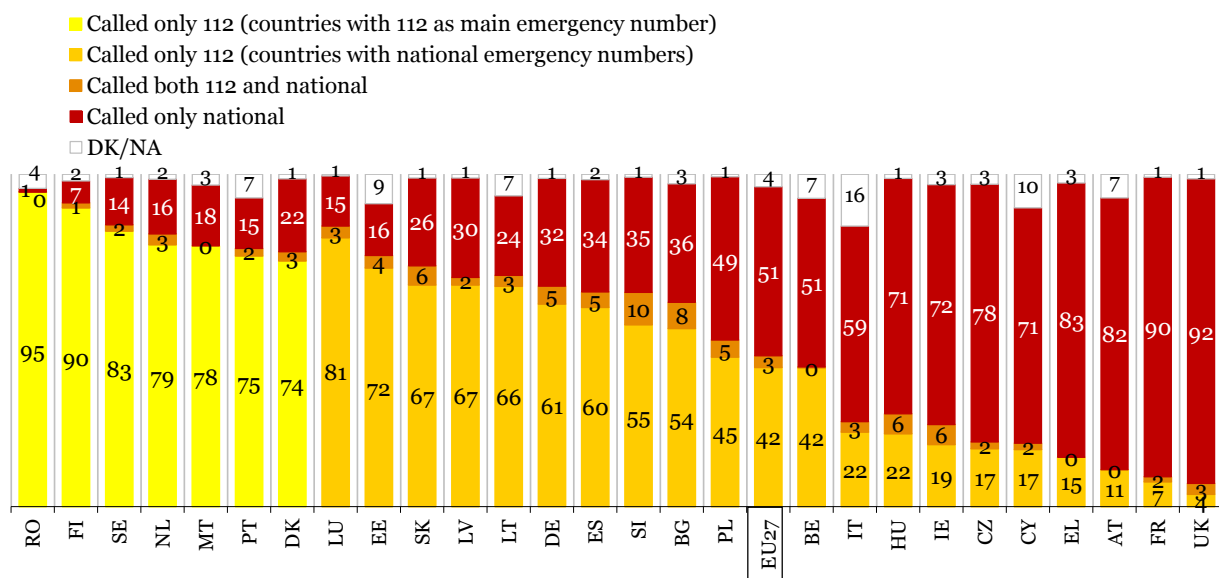
4.2 Variations in usage of the EU-wide emergency number

In all countries where 112 was the sole/main emergency number, a large majority of interviewees – who had called an emergency service in the past 12 months – had called this number during an emergency situation in the past 12 months; this proportion was 95% in Romania, 91% in Finland, 85% in Sweden, 82% in the Netherlands, 78% in Malta, and 77% in Portugal and Denmark⁵.

In EU countries where other national emergency numbers were also in operation, the proportion of respondents who called the EU-wide emergency number 112 during an emergency situation in the past 12 months was the highest in Luxembourg (84%), followed by Estonia (76%), Slovakia (73%), Latvia and Lithuania (both 69%). In the UK and France, however, less than 10% of respondents had called the 112 number; in these countries, 92% and 90%, respectively, had only called national emergency numbers.

Number called during an emergency situation in the past 12 months

Base: respondents who had made an emergency call in the past 12 months



Q3. If you called any emergency number during the last 12 months, was this call made...?
 %, Base: those who called an emergency number in the past 12 months, by country

In countries where other national emergency numbers were also in operation, some socio-demographic groups were more likely to have called the EU-wide emergency number 112 during an emergency situation in the past 12 months from one's own country: men (47% vs. 33% of women), 25-54 year-olds (42%-45% vs. 34% of over 54 year-olds and 37% of 15-24 year-olds), respondents without an impairment (41% vs. 32% of respondents with an impairment), metropolitan and rural residents (42% vs. 38% of respondents in urban areas) and manual workers (48% vs. 36% of inactive respondents; the corresponding proportion for employees and the self-employed was 42%).

⁵ A small proportion of these respondents had called the 112 number and another emergency number in the past 12 months.