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An options menu for both emergency numbers as of 11 February 2020

BRUSSELS, 10/02/2020 - Tomorrow, 11 February, on the occasion of the European 112 Day, Belgium will introduce an options menu for the emergency numbers 112 and 101. In case of an emergency, you can call both 112 and 101 to reach one of the three emergency services (fire brigade, ambulance or police). In any case, you get some help even if you don't make a choice or if you make the wrong choice.

One options menu for both emergency numbers

Whether you call 112 or 101, the options menu will allow you to choose the help you need: fire brigade, ambulance or police. Once you have made your choice, you will be directly connected to an operator of the emergency call centre who can immediately send the help you need.

This options menu makes your choice easier in an emergency situation and prevents your call from being transferred from 112 to 101 (or vice versa). The options menu is similar to the one on the 112 BE app, which allows you to choose the kind of help you need by clicking on an icon (ambulance, fire brigade or police). Whether you're using the 112 BE app or the options menu, you will be immediately connected to the appropriate emergency call centre.

Reminder : in Belgium, the FPS Home Affairs recommends calling 112 to get urgent help from an ambulance or the fire brigade. For the police, you can also call 101. Behind these two numbers are two different emergency centres with different processes for handling emergency calls : one is for the medical help and the fire brigade, the other for the police. Before the introduction of the menu, if you called 112 for police assistance, you were transferred to the emergency number 101. As a result of this call transfer, valuable time could be lost.

In any case, you will receive help

When calling the emergency number 112 or 101, you are helped in any case. If you can't make a choice or if you make the wrong choice, you will still be transferred to an operator.

Pieter De Crem, Minister of Security and Home Affairs: " *The introduction of the new options menu is intended to provide even faster and appropriate assistance to those who need it. This options menu was tested as a pilot project between 1st October 2018 and 17 January 2019 in the provinces of Namur and West Flanders, and it was positively evaluated. The population of these two provinces used the new system without any problem and the FPS Home Affairs did not receive any complaint, which led to expand the project nationwide. Moreover, the use of this technology has a positive effect both on reducing the number of unnecessary calls (such as pocket calls or malicious calls) and on the number of calls that need to be transferred from 112 to 101 and vice versa.*"

Easy to use

The options menu is an easy to use tool allowing us to help you quickly and efficiently. It works in the same way as the 112 BE app: by offering you a simple choice between ambulance, fire brigade or police, before putting you in contact with an operator. If you have a smartphone, you can also use the 112 BE app as an alternative to the options menu.

This menu helps the callers more efficiently and quickly because, on the one hand, they are immediately transferred to the appropriate emergency centre and, on the other hand, because more telephone lines remain free as operators in the emergency centres do not have to take care of unnecessary calls or do not lose time transferring calls.

How does the menu work ?

As of 11 February 2020, here is how to proceed if you need urgent help from an ambulance, the fire brigade or the police:

1. Call the emergency number 112 or 101
2. Listen to the following message:
*" Emergency call centre.
For an ambulance or the fire brigade, press 1.
For the police, press 2."*
3. Please make your choice: 1 or 2.
4. If you don't make a choice, the message is repeated once more:
*" For an ambulance or the fire brigade, press 1.
For the police, press 2.
Hold the line. We will transfer your call. "*
5. Hold the line: an operator will take your call.

You first hear the options menu. As soon as you confirm your choice by pressing 1 or 2, you are transferred to an operator in the emergency call centre you need. If you don't make a choice, the message will be repeated once and you will then be automatically transferred to the territorially competent emergency call centre. If you make the wrong choice, the operator will transfer you to the appropriate emergency call centre, just like before.

In the Brussels-Capital Region, this message is spoken in French and Dutch. In the province of Liège, this message is spoken in French and German.

[More information](#)

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