



ECC Decision (07)03

Reserving the National Numbering Range Beginning with '116' for Harmonised Numbers for Harmonised Services of Social Value (2007/116/EC), (2009/884/EC) and and ((EU) 2023/468)¹

approved 6 July 2007

latest amended 8 March 2024

¹ Comparable provisions to those given in this ECC Decision are given in Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/468 of 25 November 2022 [3] and Commission Decision 2009/884/EC of 30 November 2009 amending Decision 2007/116/EC as regards the introduction of additional reserved numbers beginning with '116' (notified under document C(2022)8407 and C(2009)9425) [2]. EU/EFTA Member States and, if so approved by the EEA Joint Committee, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway are obliged to implement the EC Decision.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1 INTRODUCTION

In many European countries, certain services of a social nature are available either via normal telephone numbers or via special short number. Examples are services which answer a specific social need, in particular which contribute to the well-being or safety of citizens or particular groups of citizens, or help citizens in difficulty, and which are potentially of value to visitors from other countries. Today, numbers for the same service are often different in different countries. A single number will provide a European identity for a service; it will facilitate awareness-raising campaigns and may increase the efficiency/effectiveness of the provision of the service at European level.

2 BACKGROUND

The following conditions apply to services using 116 numbers:

- Numbers in use will be 6 digits in length. Initially, the ranges 1160xy and 1161xy will be opened. The number 116112 will not be assigned nor used;
- The service is targeted at individuals and should be a clear benefit to them. The service is not designed as a service for businesses, but business users or employees would not be precluded from calling the service;
- The service is potentially of value to visitors from other countries;
- The service answers a specific social need; in particular it (a) contributes to the well-being or safety of citizens or of a particular group of citizens or (b) helps citizens in difficulty;
- The service provides information and/or assistance and/or a reporting tool to citizens;
- The service is open to all citizens; no prior registration to the service is required. "Members only" services are excluded;
- The service is not time-limited. Services of a temporary nature, e.g. services that might be associated with a single event of some sort, are excluded;
- The service is not commercial in nature, i.e. there can be no payment, or payment commitment as a pre-requisite to use the service;
- The following activities are excluded during a call: advertisement, entertainment, marketing and selling, using the call for the future selling of commercial services. Advertising or marketing of the service in general is not precluded, but this should not take the form of advertising during the call e.g. by way of voice announcements.

3 REQUIREMENT FOR AN ECC DECISION

In order to implement the concept of Harmonised European Short Codes an ECC Decision with individual reserved numbers for European services of social value listed in the Annex of the Decision is necessary. The Annex will be updated independently from the body text of the Decision by Working Group Numbering and Networks (WG NaN).

ECC DECISION OF 6 JULY 2007 ON RESERVING THE NATIONAL NUMBERING RANGE BEGINNING WITH '116' FOR HARMONISED NUMBERS FOR HARMONISED SERVICES OF SOCIAL VALUE (2007/116/EC), (2009/884/EC) AND ((EU) 2023/468) (ECC DECISION (07)03), AMENDED ON 26 FEBRUARY 2008, AMENDED 16 JUNE 2010 AND AMENDED 8 MARCH 2024

“The European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations,

considering

- a) that it is desirable for citizens, including travellers and disabled users, to be able to reach certain services that have a social value by using the same recognisable numbers in all participating countries. At present there is a patchwork of numbering and dialling schemes in the CEPT countries and no common numbering scheme is in operation to reserve the same telephone numbers for such services in the CEPT area. CEPT action is therefore required for that purpose;
- b) that the harmonisation of numbering resources is necessary to allow these services provided in different CEPT countries to be accessed by end-users using the same number. The combination “same number – same service” will ensure that a specific service in which ever CEPT country it is provided is always associated with a specific number within the CEPT area. This will provide the service with a pan-European identity to the benefit of the European citizen who will know that the same number dialled will give access to the same type of service in different CEPT countries; This measure will encourage pan-European services to develop;
- c) that in order to reflect the social function of the services in question, the harmonised numbers should be accessed free of charge by the caller, without this meaning that operators would be obliged to carry calls to 116 numbers at their own expense. The free of charge nature of the numbers is therefore an essential component of the harmonisation being carried out;
- d) that it is necessary to attach conditions closely related to controlling the nature of the service provided to ensure that the harmonised numbers are used for the provision of the particular type of service covered by the Decision;
- e) that it may be necessary that specific conditions are attached to the right of use for a specific harmonised number, for example, that the associated service should be provided 24 hours a day and 7 days a week;
- f) that national regulatory authorities are responsible for the management of national numbering plans and for controlling the assignment of national numbering resources to specific undertakings;
- g) that the list of specific numbers in the numbering range beginning with ‘116’ should be regularly updated. Participating countries should make known the existence of such numbers in a manner that is accessible to all interested parties, for example, via their websites;
- h) The ECC will consider revision or further adaptation of the present Decision in the light of experience gained, in particular whether a specific service for which a number has been reserved has developed on a pan-European basis.

DECIDES

1. that the numbering range beginning with ‘116’ shall be reserved in national numbering plans for harmonised numbers for harmonised services of social value. The specific numbers within this numbering range and the services for which each number is reserved are listed in the Annex;
2. that ‘harmonised service of social value’ is a service meeting a common description to be accessed free of charge by the caller via a number, which is potentially of value to visitors from other countries and which answers a specific social need, in particular which contributes to the well-being or safety of citizens, or particular groups of citizens, or helps citizens in difficulty;
3. that participating countries shall ensure that
 - a) numbers listed in the Annex are used only for the services for which they have been reserved;
 - b) numbers within the ‘116’ numbering range that are not listed in the Annex are not used;
 - c) the number 116112 is neither assigned nor used for any service;

4. that participating countries shall attach the following conditions to the right of use of harmonised numbers for the provision of harmonised services of social value
 - a) the service provides information, or assistance, or a reporting tool to citizens, or any combination thereof;
 - b) the service is open to all citizens without any requirement of prior registration;
 - c) the service is not time-limited;
 - d) there is no payment, or payment commitment as a prerequisite to use the service;
 - e) the following activities are excluded during a call: advertisement, entertainment, marketing and selling, using the call for the future selling of commercial services;

In addition, participating countries shall attach specific conditions to the right of use of harmonised numbers as set out in the Annex;

5. that regarding the assignment of harmonised numbers
 - a) participating countries shall take all necessary measures to ensure that the competent National Regulatory Authority can assign the numbers referred to in Annex 1;
 - b) the listing of a specific number and the associated harmonised service of social value does not carry an obligation for CEPT countries to ensure that the service in question is provided within their territory;
 - c) once a number has been listed in the Annex, participating countries shall make known at national level that the specific number is available for the provision of the associated harmonised service of social value, and that applications for the rights of use for this specific number may be submitted;
 - d) participating countries shall ensure that a register of all harmonised numbers, with their associated harmonised services of social value, available in their territory is maintained. The register shall be easily accessible to the public;
6. that CEPT administrations shall report periodically to the ECC on the actual use of numbers listed in the Annex for the provision of the related services within their territory;
7. that this Decision enters into force on 8 March 2024;
8. that the preferred date for implementation of this Decision shall be by 8 September 2024;
9. that CEPT administrations shall communicate the national measures implementing this Decision to the ECC Chairman and the Office when the Decision is nationally implemented.”

Note:

Please check the Office documentation database <https://docdb.cept.org/> for the up to date position on the implementation of this and other ECC Decisions.

ANNEX 1: AMENDMENT 3

Comparable provisions to this annex are given in Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/468 of 25 November 2022 [3] and Commission Decision 2009/884/EC of 30 November 2009 amending Decision 2007/116/EC [2].

Approved by the Working Group Numbering, Naming and Addressing at its meetings in Amsterdam, 26-27 February 2008 (Amendment 1), Vilnius, 14-16 June 2010 (Amendment 2) and ECC Plenary at its meeting number 63 in March 2024 (Amendment 3).

The participating countries shall take all necessary measures to ensure that as from 8 September 2024 the competent National Regulatory Authority can assign those numbers added to the list by virtue of this Decision.

Table 1: List of numbers reserved for harmonised services of social value

Number	Service for which this number is reserved	Specific conditions attached to the right of use for this number
116000	<p><u>Name of service:</u> Hotline for missing children</p> <p><u>Description:</u> The service (a) takes calls reporting missing children and passes them on to the Police; (b) offers guidance to and supports the persons responsible for the missing child; (c) supports the investigation.</p>	Service continuously available (i.e. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, nation-wide).
116006	<p><u>Name of the service:</u> Helpline for victims of crime</p> <p><u>Description:</u> The service enables victims of crime to get emotional support in such circumstances, to be informed about their rights and about ways to claim their rights, and to be referred to the relevant organisations. In particular, it provides information about (a) local police and criminal justice proceedings; (b) possibilities of compensation and insurance matters. It also provides support in finding other sources of help relevant to the victims of crime.</p>	Where the service is not continuously available (i.e. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, nation-wide), the service provider must ensure that information about availability is made publicly available in an easily accessible form, and that, during periods of unavailability, callers to the service are advised when the service will next become available.
116016	<p><u>Name of service:</u> Helpline for victims of violence against women</p> <p><u>Description:</u> The service enables victims of violence against women to seek assistance and support, to be informed of their rights and of ways to claim their rights, and to be referred to the relevant organisations.</p>	Where the service is not continuously available (i.e. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, nation-wide), the service provider must ensure that information about availability is made publicly available in an easily accessible form, and that, during periods of unavailability, callers to the service are advised when the service will next become available.
116111	<p><u>Name of the service:</u> Child helplines</p> <p><u>Description:</u> The service helps children in need of care and protection and links them to services and resources; it provides children with an opportunity to express their concerns, talk about issues directly affecting them and contact someone in an emergency situation.</p>	Where the service is not continuously available (i.e. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, nation-wide), the service provider must ensure that information about availability is made publicly available in an easily accessible form, and that, during periods of unavailability, callers to the service are advised when the service will next become available.

Number	Service for which this number is reserved	Specific conditions attached to the right of use for this number
116117	<p><u>Name of the service:</u> Non-emergency medical on-call service</p> <p><u>Description:</u> The service directs callers to the medical assistance appropriate to their needs, which are urgent but non-life-threatening, especially, but not exclusively, outside normal office hours, over the weekend and on public holidays. It connects the caller to a skilled and supported call-handler, or connects the caller directly to a qualified medical practitioner or clinician.</p>	<p>Where the service is not continuously available (i.e. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, nation-wide), the service provider must ensure that information about availability is made publicly available in an easily accessible form, and that, during periods of unavailability, callers to the service are advised when the service will next become available.</p>
116123	<p><u>Name of the service:</u> Emotional support helplines</p> <p><u>Description:</u> The service enables the caller to benefit from a genuine human relationship based on non-judgemental listening. It offers emotional support to callers suffering from loneliness, in a state of psychological crisis, or contemplating suicide.</p>	<p>Where the service is not continuously available (i.e. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, nation-wide), the service provider must ensure that information about availability is made publicly available in an easily accessible form, and that, during periods of unavailability, callers to the service are advised when the service will next become available.</p>

ANNEX 2: LIST OF REFERENCES

- [1] COMMISSION DECISION of 15 February 2007 on reserving the national numbering range beginning with '116' for harmonised numbers for harmonised services of social value (notified under document number C(2007) 249) (Text with EEA relevance) (2007/116/EC)
- [2] COMMISSION DECISION of 30 November 2009 amending Decision 2007/116/EC as regards the introduction of additional reserved numbers beginning with '116' (notified under document C(2009) 9425) (Text with EEA relevance) (2009/884/EC)
- [3] COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION (EU) 2023/468 of 25 November 2022 amending Decision 2007/116/EC as regards the introduction of an additional reserved number beginning with 116 (notified under document C(2022) 8407)