

## Firefighters network meeting and study visit: health and safety at centre of discussion



(18 December 2018) On 12-13 December the EPSU Firefighters network met in Brussels for a two-day discussion and practices exchange. The meeting was hosted by the Belgian Unions who also organised a visit to the firefighters' school PIVO, in the Flemish Brabant province. The visit at the school and the discussion on the following day allowed participants, coming from 17 countries, to share their experiences and the latest developments in terms of health and safety, training and equipment, both at legislative level and on how legislation is enforced locally. In particular, the Belgian Unions presented the recent legislative developments and the implications on health and safety for firefighters in Belgium.

A large part of the meeting was dedicated to discuss health and safety provisions for firefighters, including the role of social dialogue for a better work environment, for the design of fire stations and for provisions to prevent and reduce exposure to dangerous substances. In this regard, Tony Musu from the ETUI presented the latest

developments on the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive and Davis Boys from PSI the ILO Guidelines on decent work for Public Emergency Services.

The London Grenfell Tower fire incident was presented by the UK FBU and discussions followed, touching upon, among others, health and safety issues during and after the intervention, as well as the regulatory failures and funding cuts that contributed to the magnitude of the incident.

On this day the network also adopted a statement (soon available) demanding greater protection from exposure to carcinogens, mutagens and reprotoxics (CMRs) in the course of their work.

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