

Cuts kill firefighters. More investment in staff needed!



(19 September 2024) The European Public Service Union (EPSU) is deeply saddened about the tragic death of a firefighter (59) in Italy. He was a trade union member. We are mourning the loss of Antonio Ciccorelli, who made the ultimate sacrifice while saving others a few months of his retirement.

During yesterday's heavy storm and flooding in Italy, in the Foggia region, Italian firefighters were on the frontline to save people's lives. Antonio was one of them. His service car was swept away by the flood after he had rescued two people trapped in their car.

Despite the growing frequency of wildfires, storms and heavy rains resulting in flooding, twelve EU member states have reduced the number of firefighters. Italy is one of them, with a 10.2% reduction. [The number of firefighters in the country shrank from 41,444 to 37,200 between 2022 and 2023.](#) This is outrageous. The European Parliament adopted a resolution (19/9) to draw attention to the need to invest and adapt to climate change related events which become more frequent and more intense. ([Parliament reacts to recent extreme weather events in Europe | News | European Parliament \(europa.eu\)](#))

EPSU and ETUC wrote to the European Commission and explained how the cuts put the public at unnecessary risk and left the remaining firefighters facing growing danger with fewer resources last week. [We urged the Commissioners to take immediate action. Delays costs lives.](#) We call on the European Commission to meet with EPSU and the trade unions as soon as possible to discuss the urgent steps to be taken. Firefighters shouldn't pay the consequences of austerity policies with their lives. Let's protect the firefighters and rescue workers together. Let's not lose one more of our heroes.

Our deepest condolences go to Antonio Ciccorelli's family, his colleagues, and their unions. [EPSU has written to CGIL-FP.](#)

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