X24 Europe

Why is the scenario for X24 Europe located in the Balkans?

Many people are asking the X24 Europe organizers the same question, "Why is X24 Europe picking on the Balkans?" Hopefully, the following information will answer that question and help clarify any misconceptions.

The purpose of this Exercise 24 Europe (X24 Europe) is three-fold. First, X24 Europe is testing current and innovative social media tools as used in a humanitarian crisis; second, X24 Europe is a place for continued collaboration between people (and organizations) involved in crisis response and humanitarian assistance; and third, to start people thinking about what they will need to do to protect themselves and how to they keep contact with the outside world when a disaster occurs.

So why the Balkans?

When the X24 Group was asked to design an exercise that involved "earthquakes, tsunamis, and destruction of critical infrastructure" in Europe, we conducted research to identify the most likely location for such events to occur. Geologic maps of Europe were reviewed to find the most seismically active regions. As it turns out, the Balkans is one of the most active seismic regions on the planet. For

the nations of the central Balkans, the reason for this enhanced actively is because the central Balkan region lies along the Eurasian-Aegean-African Plate boundaries (1,2, 3). Currently, the African Plate is moving northeastward, causing the denser oceanic crust of the Adriatic Sea to be thrust beneath the lighter continental crust of the central Balkans. Motion on these plates is visible on the surface by the slow closing of the Adriatic Sea and the mountainous topography of those countries bordering the Adriatic Sea. The movement of these plates is relentless and is the cause the seismic activity in this area.

As current world events have shown, earthquakes on offshore thrust fault can cause tsunamis. Dr. Vlado Malacic of the University of Ljubljiana, Slovenia(4) and a team from Kandilli Observatory and Research Institute, Istanbul-Turkey, coordinated by Dr. Ocal Necmioglu(5), prepared models of an earthquake-generated tsunami in the Adriatic Sea.

These models show that maximum expected earthquake in this region of the central Balkans is magnitude (Mw) 7.3. A tsunami generated by a Mw 7.3 earthquake will strike the coastlines of Southern Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Montenegro with localized surges up to 5 meters, but rapidly diminishing due to bottom configurations and interference caused by wave reflection.

So the Balkans became the location of the scenario because the features of the land met the needs of the exercise.

To reiterate, the purpose Exercise X24 Europe is not to scare the peoples of the region, but to test social media tools, to provide an opportunity for continued collaboration among crisis responders and humanitarian assistance providers, and to inform people worldwide and get them to discussing what to do when a disaster occurs. It is our belief that any population that understands what “could” happen is better prepared for any disaster than a population that ignores it.

References

1. “ASSESSMENT OF EARTHQUAKE HAZARD IN TURKEY AND NEIGHBORING REGIONS”; Mustafa Erdik et al, Annali di Geofisica, Vol. 42, N. 6, December 1999.

2. “PROBABILISTIC SEISMIC HAZARD MAPS FOR THE NORTH BALKANS REGION”, Roger. M.W. Musson, Annali di Geofisica, Vol. 42, N. 6, December 1999.

3. “EARTHQUALE MODEL FOR THE EUROPEAN-MEDITERRANEAN REGION FOR THE PURPOSE OF GEM1”; G. Grunthal, R. Arvidsson, and Ch. Bosse; GFZ German Research Centre for Geosciences, October 2010.

4. “ADRIATIC TSUNAMIS”: Dr. V. Malacic and B. Petelin, Marine Biological Station, University of Ljubljiana, Slovenia, 2005.

5. “X24 EUROPE: HOW CAN KOERI CONTRIBUTE AS A CANDIDATE RTWC3”; Meral Özel, Nurcan; Cevatoğlu, Melis; Yalçıner, Ahmet Cevdet; Kamer, Yaver; Necmioğlu, Öcal; Erdik, Mustafa, 2011.

Physical Orientation

The Adriatic Sea, covering an expanse of about 60,000 square miles (160,000 km²), lies between Italy and the Balkan Peninsula. The average depth is 1,457 feet (444 m) and the maximum depth is 3,300 feet (1,000 m). The Dalmatian Coast is

part of the east coast of the sea and includes the coastlines of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro.

A number of islands are located off the Dalmatian Coast. Some of these islands have year-round residents with the island population swelling with the tourist season.

The coastal waters are home to fisheries and host to diving and sailing enthusiasts nearly year round. Beach surfacess very from sand to rocks. Land use along the Dalmatian Coast includes agriculture and tourism.

Low mountains rise almost directly from the sea along most of the Dalmatian Coast.

Country	Capital City	in NATO ?	in the EU ?
Croatia	Zagreb	Yes	No
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Sarajevo	No	No
Montenegro	Podgorica	No	No

Transportation Overview

Croatia Bosnia and Herzegovina Montenegro

Telecommunications Overview:

Croatia Bosnia and Herzegovina Montenegro

For more information about these countries, including overview maps, go to:

https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/hr.html

https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bk.html

https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mj.html

Phases of a Humanitarian Assistance Response

Note 1: X24 Europe is a test of social media. In the event of a real world emergency, follow your local, regional, and national emergency response plans.

Note 2: The information provided below is representative of the events that happen during a Humanitarian Assistance response.

Note 3: An hourly update will be broadcast on JustinTV (located on the dashboard at http://x24.eushare.org

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What to expect in Phase I (the first 48 hours following a sudden onset disaster)

- First responders conduct time-sensitive search and rescue operations for survivors
- Local authorities begin to assess damage
- Local authorities assure civil authority, providing stability and a safe environment
- Affected nations determiine capacity to conduct disaster operations
- Global crisis response communities shares data in real-time via social media, SMS, Rss/KML feeds and vizualization maps

What to expect in Phase II (Days 2-15):

- Affected nations officially request for international assistance from the UN (and NATO and the European Union) as well as regional partner nations (this request may be sent out in the first 48 hours).

- Search and Rescue continues, but eventually become recovery operations
- Lines of communications restored (radio, television, telephone/cellular, internet)
- Air and sea port operations resumed
- Assessments of infrastructure damage continue and initial restoration of river, road, and rail transportation infrastructure begins
- International and Non-Governmental Organizations provide Humanitarian Assistance to affected populations
- Camps established for internally displaced persons or refugees

What to expect in Phase III (Days 30-45)

- Reconstruction continues
- Restoration of Power, Water, Sanitation
- Displace Persons or refugees move back to hometown
- Potential for disease outbreaks (in all Phases)

What to expect in Phase IV

- Turnover of Humanitarian Assistance activities to affected nation
- Reconstruction continues
- Internally displaced persons and refugees return home
- Foreign militaries exit the affected nations (return home)
