

Zagreb Faculty of Civil Engineering at the front of the earthquake crisis

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During the difficult COVID-19 restrictions, on the 22nd March Sunday morning, Zagreb city and surrounding area was hit with two strong earthquakes. The magnitude of the first earthquake was 5.5 according to Richter, and the intensity at the epicentre was level VII of the MCS scale. The following one was of the magnitude 5.0 according to Richter. They were followed by a numerous of weaker tremors during following days, but also with a few additional earthquakes with the magnitude of more than 3.0.

Already during the Sunday morning, immediately after first strikes, the Crisis Headquarters under the City Office of emergency management is formed. It is led by the professor Josip Atalić from the Faculty of Civil Engineering and his team which are now coordinating more than 200 civil engineers, voluntary helping during this crisis. From more than 25000 requirements of citizens and governmental offices, 5000 units are assessed during post-earthquake week ... still enormous work is to be done.

More than 30 teachers, professors, professional associates and assistant researchers of the Faculty of Civil Engineering of the University of Zagreb joined the Crisis HQ and are helping with the preliminary condition assessment of buildings damaged in the earthquake.

Our colleagues are assessing buildings of higher importance such are hospitals, but also old residential buildings in the traditional city centre, sacral objects, museums, university buildings ect. And this is just the beginning! The planning of the detailed assessment methodology is under process in order to properly assess all highly damaged buildings and adequately approach their repair and reconstruction following the rules of the profession.

In addition, the Faculty of Civil Engineering, under the leadership of the dean prof. Stjepan Lakušić, has recently appointed as the coordinator of the HQ for inspection, damage assessment and rehabilitation of earthquake damaged buildings of the University of Zagreb.

An unusual situation that confronted us at the time of the fight with the new COVID-19 virus is extremely demanding. But our engineers are ready, earthquake is something that, unfortunately, in our country should not be a surprise. Experience from Croatian post-war reconstructions, Montenegro, Dubrovnik and historic Ston city post-earthquake damage assessments and recent building assessment experience in the earthquake-stricken Albania, is giving us the confidence in professionalism and strength of our engineers.



Photos taken by the Faculty employees during the earthquake damage assessment (Stepinac, Vlašić)