

# Strong quake shakes Croatia, damaging buildings in capital

March 22 2020, by Darko Bandic

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A man inspects the damage caused by an earthquake in Zagreb, Croatia, Sunday, March 22, 2020. A strong earthquake shook Croatia and its capital on Sunday, causing widespread damage and panic. (AP Photo/Filip Horvat)

A strong earthquake shook Croatia and its capital on Sunday, causing widespread damage and panic. A 15-year-old was reported in critical condition and others were injured, news outlets reported.

The European seismological agency, EMSC, said the [earthquake](#) measured 5.3 and struck a wide area north of the capital, Zagreb, at 6:23 a.m. (0523 GMT) Sunday. The epicenter was 7 kilometers (4 miles) north of Zagreb at a depth of 10 kilometers (6 miles).

Many buildings in Zagreb cracked and walls and rooftops were damaged. Downtown streets were littered with debris. Concrete slabs fell on cars and chimneys landed in front of entrances.

Photographs from the scene show mothers dressed in nightgowns hugging their newborn babies in a parking lot as they evacuated a maternity hospital amid freezing temperatures.

Zagreb's iconic cathedral was also damaged with the top of one of its two spires collapsing. The cathedral was rebuilt after it toppled in the 1880 earthquake.

Power was cut as people ran out of their homes. Several fires were also reported. At least two other tremors were recorded later. Residents shared photos of belongings falling off shelves, broken bottles and glass inside homes.

Officials first said a 15-year-old was killed, but doctors later said that she is in [critical condition](#) and that they are fighting for her life. They gave no immediate details on the extent of other injuries.



One of the damaged spires, right, of Zagreb's iconic cathedral is seen after an earthquake in Zagreb, Croatia, Sunday, March 22, 2020. The cathedral was rebuilt after it toppled in the 1880 earthquake. A strong earthquake shook Croatia and its capital on Sunday, causing widespread damage and panic. (AP Photo/Darko Bandic)

The earthquake struck amid a partial lockdown of the capital because of the spread of the coronavirus. People were told to avoid public areas, such as parks and public squares, but had little choice as they fled their residences.

Up to five people are allowed to be together while keeping distance.

Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic said earthquake was the biggest in



Zagreb in the last 140 years.

He urged the citizens to remain calm and stay outside their homes in the central parts of Zagreb, which sustained the most damage.

"We have two parallel crisis that contradict each other," Plenkovic said after an emergency meeting of Croatia's top officials.

Croatia's army and all emergency services will start clearing the streets as soon as possible, while assessment will start of the damage at the same time.



People walk past a damaged house after an earthquake in Zagreb, Croatia,

Sunday, March 22, 2020. A strong earthquake shook Croatia and its capital on Sunday, causing widespread damage and panic.(AP Photo/Filip Horvat)



People rest in park after an earthquake in Zagreb, Croatia, Sunday, March 22, 2020. A strong earthquake shook Croatia and its capital on Sunday, causing widespread damage and panic. (AP Photo/Darko Bandic)





A car is crushed by falling debris after an earthquake in Zagreb, Croatia, Sunday, March 22, 2020. A strong earthquake shook Croatia and its capital on Sunday, causing widespread damage and panic. (AP Photo/Darko Bandic)



A car is crushed by falling debris after an earthquake in Zagreb, Croatia, Sunday, March 22, 2020. A strong earthquake shook Croatia and its capital on Sunday, causing widespread damage and panic. (AP Photo/Filip Horvat)





People inspect the damage caused by an earthquake at the main square in central Zagreb, Croatia, Sunday, March 22, 2020. A strong earthquake shook Croatia and its capital on Sunday, causing widespread damage and panic. (AP Photo/Filip Horvat)





A car is crushed by falling debris after an earthquake in Zagreb, Croatia, Sunday, March 22, 2020. A strong earthquake shook Croatia and its capital on Sunday, causing widespread damage and panic. (AP Photo/Darko Bandic)



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A car is crushed by falling debris after an earthquake in Zagreb, Croatia, Sunday, March 22, 2020. A strong earthquake shook Croatia and its capital on Sunday, causing widespread damage and panic. (AP Photo/Darko Bandic)



People inspect a car crushed by falling debris after an earthquake in Zagreb, Croatia, Sunday, March 22, 2020. A strong earthquake shook Croatia and its capital on Sunday, causing widespread damage and panic. (AP Photo/Darko Bandic)





People rest on the street after an earthquake in Zagreb, Croatia, Sunday, March 22, 2020. A strong earthquake shook Croatia and its capital on Sunday, causing widespread damage and panic. (AP Photo/Darko Bandic)



People rest in park after an earthquake in Zagreb, Croatia, Sunday, March 22, 2020. A strong earthquake shook Croatia and its capital on Sunday, causing widespread damage and panic.(AP Photo/Darko Bandic)





A car is crushed by falling debris after an earthquake in Zagreb, Croatia, Sunday, March 22, 2020. A strong earthquake shook Croatia and its capital on Sunday, causing widespread damage and panic.(AP Photo/Darko Bandic)



People stand on the street after an earthquake in Zagreb, Croatia, Sunday, March 22, 2020. A strong earthquake shook Croatia and its capital on Sunday, causing widespread damage and panic. (AP Photo/Darko Bandic)

"We will try to clear the streets as soon as possible," he said. "Stay outside your homes and keep distance."

Interior Minister Davor Bozinovic said the situation was complicated by the restrictive virus-related measures in place.

"There are rules for when there is an earthquake, but when there is an earthquake at the same time when there is a global pandemic, then it's a much more complex situation." Bozinovic told the state HINA news



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Citation: Strong quake shakes Croatia, damaging buildings in capital (2020, March 22) retrieved 15 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2020-03-strong-quake-croatia-capital.html>

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