WELCOME TO THE 13TH NATO CAX FORUM

The Crisis Management and Disaster Response Centre of Excellence (CMDR COE), NATO Modelling and Simulation Centre of Excellence (NATO M&S COE) and Headquarters, Supreme Allied Command Transformation (HQ SACT) are pleased to host the 13th Computer Assisted Exercise (CAX) FORUM in Sofia, Bulgaria at the Marinela Hotel.

1. ENROLLMENT, REGISTRATION & FEE

In order to enroll at the conference, please register, NLT 04th September on the provided link: https://www.cmdrcoe.org/menu.php?m_id=2&c_id=66

Further enlistment after that date will be dealt according to the residual seats, if any.

Scientific Paper contributions are welcome, NLT 31st August.

For what concern hotel booking, please refer to the para.8 below.

At the Conference, the Forum Registration Desk will be located in the Marinela Hotel main hall. For your convenience, Registration Desk will be active from Monday, September 24th (15.00 - 20.00), to Thursday, September 27th (09.00 - 13.00).

Conference Fees:

Participation: €150,00;

Booth (table 2.40 m. x 0.90 m.): € 360 (includes refreshments and lunches from Sep 25th to 27th and one person pass). Payment can be submitted to the Registration helpdesk (cash).

At registration, make sure you have your personal ID document with you. After registration, you will receive a "color coded" name Badge, as described at point 2 below.

If you would like to have a booth, advertisement spots or sponsorship, please refer to the POCs below.

2. BADGE DESCRIPTION

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Badge Type</th>
<th>Name</th>
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3. Security

All participants will be required to wear their badge at all times during the Forum. In accordance with Bulgarian regulations, smoking is only permitted outside the buildings, in designated areas only. Electronic devices (PCs, Mobile phones, etc.) are allowed during the Forum, but silenced.

4. Dress Code

Business attire or military uniform (no camouflage).

5. Lunch

Lunch from 13.00 to 14.30 will be served daily at the Marinela Hotel at exhibition area. For Invited VIP’s the lunches will be organized in the Restaurant. Lunch/Dinner tickets will also be available for family members/other guests, not attending the Forum, at the Marinela Hotel price.

6. Coffee breaks

Coffee breaks will be served according to the daily schedule at exhibition area.
7. CAX Forum Venue

The five-star hotel was designed by the legendary Japanese architect Kisho Kurokawa. Marinela Hotel Sofia is among the iconic buildings of Sofia. Located in the green zone of the capital, the hotel has a view from which you can enjoy both the night lights of Sofia and the beauty of The Vitosha mountain. The interior combines tradition and comfort with innovation and modern design.

**Accommodation**

The hotel is located on an area of 30,000 square meters, there are 442 rooms and suites, including the largest Presidential Suite in Bulgaria. The Hotel Marinela can satisfy the most discerning tastes and needs.

**Restaurants and Bars**

Guests of Hotel Marinela Sofia have six outstanding restaurants, several bars with rich whiskey collection and an intimate VIP area:

- **Sakura Lobby Bar** is one of the most favorite places to enjoy a cup of coffee or cocktail, for a meeting with friends or an unofficial business meeting.
- **Ambassador Restaurant** is the place where every guest can start their day with a delicious breakfast or a nice menu in a stylish and comfortable atmosphere.
- **Panorama Restaurant** is located on the top floor. Except the well-chosen delicacies from around the world it enchants its guests with the iconic hotel Marinela Sofia view.
- **Captain Cook Restaurant** offers an exquisite menu of fish and seafood of the highest quality.
- **Umami - Japanese Food & Garden**, Umami is the newest oasis for lovers of gastronomy at Hotel Marinela, Sofia! Respect for Japanese cuisine and its philosophy are our mission and way of life!
- **Candy Club** is the place you should visit if you would like to eat something sweet and elegant, or just to drink a cup of coffee.
- **Cigar Bar** of Hotel Marinela offers a selection of cigars for every connoisseur and a huge selection of whiskey of the best wineries all over the world.
- **Street Lounge** - the new city oasis in Sofia awaits you. This is the perfect place to escape from the stressful life and immerse yourself in a harmonious luxury and class. Feel romance, comfort and coziness. It is suitable for private parties, business lunch or entertainment.

**Conferences and events**

One of the biggest advantages of Marinela hotel is the Exhibition Forum Events. It is the most modern multipurpose hall in Sofia to hold large corporate events, exhibitions, concerts, weddings, shows and balls. The hall is equipped with all amenities like private kitchens, perfect service and various backdrops for events and private parties. It is equipped with high-end professional sound and lighting, and a team of professionals who can only help you earn good.

The complex has 13 other meeting rooms, the largest ballroom and conference hall in the capital city and a remarkable room on the top floor of the Hotel Marinela, with a unique view of Sofia.

**SPA and Fitness**

If you want to keep a good body shape in Sofia Hotel Marinela you can use the services of a modern gym, a spa and a large swimming pool. There is also and a Vitamin bar with a huge selection of refreshing and energizing drinks.

http://www.hotel-marinela.com/
How to reach the hotel?

Metro, buses, trolleybuses and trams serve travelers in Sofia. A single-journey ticket costs 1.60 BGN (approx. 0.80 euro cents) and can be bought from street kiosks; ticket counters in the underground stations; on-board vending machine in trams and trolleys, or from the driver (advisable to have the exact amount in cash). Taxi services in Sofia are cheap and generally easily accessible. At the airport, use the official taxi booth inside Terminal 2 to ask for a taxi (O.K. Supertrans Taxi), as those loitering outside are likely to overcharge you by anything up to 10 times the normal fare. The taxi should not be more than 15-22 BGN for a ride to the central parts of Sofia. The payment should be made in Bulgarian currency only. Some taxis provide card payment service. All taxi cars should be yellow; should have clear tariff markings on their front and side windows and should operate by meter – upon departure, make sure the meter is on. The CMDR COE recommends the services of O.K. Supertrans and Yellow Taxi.

By Car:
8. Accommodation

Accommodation rooms are allocated in the Marinela Hotel. Reservations window applies from Sep 24th to 28th 2018 included. Earlier or further reservation extension (before Sep 24th and/or after Sep 28th) should be coordinated with the Marinela Hotel Booking Dept. and will be dealt with in accordance with rooms availability in the structure. To book a room you should go on the provided link below and make your reservation.

https://reservations.travelclick.com/99911?groupId=2247295

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<tr>
<td>Twin/ Double Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luxury Apartment</td>
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Above mentioned rates are intended per room per night. Rates are inclusive of buffet breakfast and VAT (10%). Free wireless internet connection available in any hotel environment. VAT Percentage hereby mentioned correspond to the current valid rate in use. In case of an increase or decrease, Room Amount hereby mentioned will change accordingly. These rates are dedicated to "NATO CAX FORUM" Conference attendees only.

Reservations and any further additional accommodation request for other hotels is personally responsibility.

9. Social events

- **Networking icebreaker at the Marinela Hotel main hall 18:00-20:00 on 25th Sep 2018**
  - *Dress code – smart casual (no jeans, shorts, etc.)*

- **Sofia Guiding Sightseeing with concert organized by Sofia Municipality for the CAX Participants**
  - 14:30-17:00 on 26th Sep 2018.
  - *Dress code – casual*

10. NATO CMDR COE POCs

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11. Bulgaria and City of Sofia

Geographical location

Bulgaria is located in Southeast Europe, in the northeast part of the Balkan Peninsula. This geographic location places it on the crossroad between Europe, Asia and Africa.

Bulgaria is situated closer to the Equator than the pole. It falls within the southern part of the temperate climate zone with subtropical influence. Its location on the transition line between two climate zones influences the climate, soils, vegetation and animal species. All of them are characterized by great diversity. The country’s geographic position also determines the relatively wide angle of sunlight that falls on the country, making the country predominantly sunny. The official time in Bulgaria is Eastern European Time, which is two hours ahead of Greenwich Time. Bulgaria’s favorable geographic location creates excellent preconditions for the development of tourism.

NATURE

The natural landscape of Bulgaria is diverse, consisting of lowlands, plains, foothills and plateaus, river valleys, basins, and mountains of varying elevations. About 70% of the country’s territory is hilly land and 30% is mountainous. The average elevation of the country’s territory is 467 m, generally decreasing from south to north and from west to east.

Bulgaria has a population of 7,351,234 as of 01.02.2011, with 72.9% of its people living in either cities or villages. The country is justly famous for its yoghurt and other dairy products, for its rose oil products, and for its wines and brandies. One of Bulgaria’s preeminent industries is tourism.
If we only had to use one word to describe Bulgaria, it would be the word „magic“. This is a country that captivates everybody with its magnificent nature, centuries-old traditions and rich history.
Nature and development of Bulgarian civilization

In the Bulgarian lands you will find the treasures of some of the most ancient peoples that inhabited Europe. Situated between the East and the West, and having favorable climate and natural resources, the country has always been a site of continuous cultural exchange. Every local city museum has an abundant and rich collection of antiques and cultural remains that will reveal to you the world of the country’s most ancient citizens, as well as their religious, cultural and everyday necessities. One of the most famous treasures, the Varna Chalcolithic Necropolis, provides the world with the oldest processed golden treasure in Europe (dated back to the 5th millennium BC).

The Bulgarian state was established in 681 by the union of Proto-Bulgarians and Slavic tribes. In ceaseless battles for supremacy and through a continuous transfer of values, Bulgaria created its rich and idiosyncratic civilization. The country established itself through the ages as one of the centers of spiritual and material cultural heritage like literature, architecture and jewelry. Even today, in the capital cities of Pliska, Veliko Preslav and Veliko Tarnovo, you can feel the glorious past of the country’s heyday. An important moment in the country’s development was establishing Christianity as the official religion. Thanks to the Slavic alphabet, which was created here, the literary movement in the kingdom achieved a strong spiritual uplift. This new religion started to spread from these lands all across the Balkan Peninsula.

The church and monastery frescoes from this period are magnificent. The Boyana Church near Sofia can be compared to the Renaissance paragons, although it precedes them by a century and a half. The monasteries near Ivanovo, the Aladzha Monastery and the Bachkovo Monastery will amaze you with the mystery of their builders, artists and woodcarvers, as well as with their splendid combination of natural environment and location of the religious facilities. Particularly imposing is the capital Veliko Tarnovo together with the Tsarevets hill and with its astonishing urban plan, walls, churches, towers, and everyday life facilities.
When conquered by the Turks in the 14th century, Bulgaria ceased its state development. However, this provided an opportunity to create a number of Christian monuments that helped to preserve the population’s ethnicity and integrity. Iconography, wood-carved altar making, and church and monastery building schools were established. The country experienced its Renaissance, called “the Revival”, hence entering the Modern Age.

Today, Bulgaria is part of the European Union and has modern urbanized cities. Eclectic and at the same time distinctive, modern Bulgaria can be enjoyed by everyone who appreciates and seeks historical sites. This is a country where legends are being told, images and architecture speak of great times and treasures lead us toward worlds of gods.

The Thracians’ world and heritage

The Thracians have left behind a multitude of cultural monuments that grow in number every year thanks to archeological excavations. Unconquerable warriors, mystical priests and skilled jewelers, they mastered metal, gold, and silver making. They were very good singers and musicians. They honored nature and its gifts and knew how to utilize the laws that govern it.

Notable among their crafts were iron-smithery, especially weapon making, as well as processing bronze perfectly. They were also making bronze bracelets, rings, clothing ornaments, horse decorations and arrow tips. Vine-growing was also very important; the Thracians’ love for wine is well-known. Local goldsmiths used to make breastplates from silver and gold that are representative of Thracian items of clothing, ceremonial decorations for the kings, their entourage and their horses. The breastplates were also used for phials and rhytons when drinking on special occasions.

Various hand-made and pottery items, bronze horse harness decorations, and 6th-4th century BC iron weapons in the Thracian necropoleises were discovered in the Varna Region near the villages of Dobrina, Kipra, Bresean, etc. Weapons and bronze items distinctive for the Thracian culture can be found in many places in Bulgaria. Their horse decorations are created in the so-called “animalistic style”, which is highly sophisticated. This is evidenced by a number of bronze findings such as appliques and headwear for horse headstalls that are abundant in any Bulgarian city museum.

The most distinctive and also most well-studied display of Thracian aristocratic culture are the opulent funerals, often conducted in monumental tombs and under imposing burial mounds. It is believed that the number of Thracian burial mounds in Bulgaria exceeds 100,000. Wealthy mound funerals have been studied and opened for visitors in the mounds near the village of Dzvari, in the Plovdiv Region, in the Mound of Mogilin in Vratsa, near the village of Sveti Gorgi, the Kapary Region, near the village of Mezek, in the Swelimad Region, and many others.
From the Middle Ages to modernity – the Bulgarian capitals

The best way to get to know Bulgaria is to visit the country’s capitals, which are part of its national heritage. Pliska, Preslav, Veliko Tarnovo and Sofia are the face of the Bulgarian state since its creation up until today. They have witnessed rise and fall, grandeur and oblivion during different periods of the country’s development. These ancient sites, rich in archaeological, historical and cultural monuments, are major tourist destinations.

First Bulgarian Kingdom – Pliska and Veliki Preslav

For two centuries, from the establishment of the Bulgarian state in 681 and up to 893, Pliska was the main political, military, cultural and economic center. In addition to this, it is among the most imposing monuments of medieval Europe’s urban development.

Situated in the middle of a wide hilly area, the first Bulgarian capital was protected by strongly fortified walls. Khan Krum’s palace is among the most remarkable monuments here. The tourists might find the secret entrances interesting: they enabled the inhabitants to leave the city without being seen. The palace had a large water reservoir and baths that were advanced for their time.

The large-scale construction activities carried out during the second phase of Pliska’s development are related with the name of the Bulgarian Khan Omurtag. The monuments from his reign include the so-called “Little Palace” with residences for members of the Khan’s family, the new baths with sophisticated heating installations, two pagan temples and the exceptionally decorated Throne Room.

Pliska is the historical city that witnessed the conversion of the Bulgarians to Christianity. The city has preserved early Christian religious buildings of imposing size, the most striking being the Big Basilica. With its 2920 m², it was the biggest Christian church on the Balkan Peninsula. The huge three-aisled church, 100 m long and 30 m wide, was surrounded by a large monastery with a complex architecture.
Veliki Preslav is the second Bulgarian capital (893-971) that is worth visiting. King Simeon I moved the capital from Pliska to Veliki Preslav and transformed the latter into one of the most majestic cities in South-Eastern Europe (the „Golden Age” of Bulgarian history). The inner city includes the king’s residence structure with its monumental stone palaces, such as the Big Palace and the Throne Room with its columns, as well as the Round Church (10th century), richly decorated with mosaics, marble and ceramic icons.

The archaeological findings include the impressive ceramic icon of St. Theodore Strateletes, the Preslav Golden Treasure, the ceramic iconostas from the Palace Monastery and a unique collection of lead seals.

The medieval capital of Bulgaria – Veliko Tarnovo

Veliko Tarnovo, the medieval capital of Bulgaria, is astonishing with its unique beauty. The city is located in Central Bulgaria, at the foot of Stara Planina. The old part of the city is situated on the historical hills Tsarevets, Trapezitsa, and Sveti Gora.

The investigation, preservation and restoration, and presentation activities carried out, as well as the large-scale construction and development works, have transformed this incredible city into a fairy tale, a desired place for a vacation and for reconnecting with antiquity and modernity. Unique cultural monuments related to the glorious history of the Bulgarian people were created and preserved here throughout the centuries-long existence of the city. The preserved remains of fortresses, palaces and churches are silent witnesses of the blossoming Bulgarian culture in the 12th-14th century.

The proximity of the ancient city Nikopolis ad Istriam, the unique architectural and historical village of Arbanasi and the numerous monasteries create favorable conditions to satisfy the scientific and cultural interests of people of all ages.

Two glorious Bulgarian ages meet here, the Middle Ages, when Veliko Tarnovo was the Bulgarian capital (12th-14th century), and the Revival, when the city became a center of everything new and progressive. First among the most famous tourist attractions is the Tsarevets hill. During the Second Bulgarian Kingdom, the hill was the residence of the king’s court, the boyars and the patriarch. It is surrounded by a fortified wall built upon natural vertical cliffs. Here you can find the Baldwin tower, parts of the palace and the Ascension of Christ Patriarch Church. Other sanctuaries in the city include...
the St. Forty Martyrs, St. Demetrius of Thessaloniki, and St. Peter and Paul churches, as well as the Birth of the Holy Virgin Cathedral. The city is also impressive with its original and unique architecture of the Revival period.

A unique attraction is presented by the Sound and Light audio-visual show. Dramatic music, colored lights, lasers and church bells tell the glorious and tragic story of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (1185-1393). The show is a unique experience and adds up to the magic of Veliko Tarnovo. Hundreds of colored lights and three laser beams present moments of the battles against the Ottoman hordes, the years of the Turkish yoke, the revolutionary movement and the Liberation. The show can be best seen from the Tsar Ivan Asem II square in front of Tsarevets.

Sofia – ancient and forever young

Sofia is not only the capital, but also the heart of Bulgaria. The city is a cultural, educational, administrative and industrial center. Its motto rightly states: “Grows up, but never gets old”. The city is surrounded by enchanting mountains – Stara Planina to the North, Vitosha to the South, Lozen ska to the Southeast and Lyulin to the Southwest.

Sofia has a 7000-year long history. The ancient Thracian city of Serdika is established on the site of a Neolithic village in the 8th century BC. The reason for populating these lands are the hot mineral springs that even today are still abundant in the capital’s central part. Under the Roman Empire, the city was the center of the Roman province of Lower Da clia. Towers, fortified walls, administrative and religious buildings were erected. Emperor Constantine the Great called the city “My Rome”. Khan Krum added Sofia to his kingdom’s territory in 809.

At this time the city had the Slavic name of Sredets, which means “middle part, center”. Later, in the Middle Ages, it was named “Sofia” after the St. Sofia Temple that exists to this day in the most central part of the city. A number of new churches were built, the Boyana Church being among the most famous and impressive, as well as beautiful administrative buildings. The documents of the Ottoman conquerors describe the city as fascinating. Sofia turned out to be an important crossroad on the Balkan Peninsula and gained the status of a crafts and trade center.

Today, Sofia is abundant with business and trade centers, dynamic nightlife and cultural landmarks. A lot of spare time is needed to visit these landmarks and it certainly cannot be done in one go. There are numerous museums, including the Museum of Natural History, the National Museum of History, the Earth and Man Museum, the Ethnographic Museum, and many others, as well as galleries and theatres.
The St. Alexander Nevsky Temple Monument is among the symbols of the city. It is a spectacular building; its belfry is 50.52 m high and in clear weather you can see the gold-plated domes kilometers before you enter the city. Right next to the temple is the oldest St. Sofia Church that the capital was named after. The square around the temple is also interesting, hosting the Unknown Soldier Monument with its eternal fire, and the open market of antiques. Nearby are the Russian St. Nikolay Church, the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and the Parliament. It is also interesting to visit the St. Cyril and Methodius National Library, as well as the St. Kliment Ohridski Sofia University, the first Bulgarian Institution of higher education. A Roman rotunda transformed into the St. George Church is situated in the inner yard of the Presidency.

A favorite place of local citizens and a key meeting point is the National Palace of Culture (NPC). The building has 16 halls, the biggest containing 5000 seats. It is a multifunctional compound, a contemporary castle synthesizing modern architecture and plastic arts. The magnificent spaces are brought to life by more than 100 works of monumental painting, sculpture, wood carving, tapestry and repercusssage. NPC is a focal point of the capital’s cultural life, as well as the site of prestigious congress and conference activities, business and political events. Everyone can find something of interest here. In NPC, you can meet great entertainers, as well as prominent congressmen, politicians and businessmen. The NPC halls keep the memory of the performances of world-famous personalities, such as Jose Carreras, Andrea Bocelli, Montserrat Caballe, Nigel Kennedy and Emir Kusturica.

Paragons of Christian art – churches and monasteries. Development of iconography

The conversion in 864-865 established Bulgaria among the European Christian powers. Since their creation, the Christian monuments became centers of Slavic literature and culture.

One of the biggest cultural and historical treasures of Bulgaria are its monasteries. Some of them date back to Byzantine time and have helped to preserve the Bulgarian spirit, while others are built on the site of destroyed cloisters. Some are impressive with their unique architecture, others with their valuable icons and skillfully made murals, and still others with their location in the most picturesque spots of the country.

The biggest and most popular Bulgarian monasteries are the Rila, Bachkovo and Troyan monasteries. Particularly picturesque are also the St. George the Victorious Glozhen Monastery near Tetevan and the Birth of the Holy Virgin Rozhen Monastery in the Sandanski and Melnik area.

The Rila Monastery is the biggest and most impressive Bulgarian monastery. It was established in the middle of the 930s by the hermit Ivan Rilski and his followers. Ivan Rilski was one of the first well-known Bulgarian monks and hermits.
Strategic location
Located at the heart of the Balkans, Bulgaria is a strategic logistics hub. Ease of transportation of cargo is provided by

- Five Pan-European corridors (IV, VII, VII, XI, X), which pass through the country
- Transport program TRACECA, which connects Europe with Caucasian and Central Asian region
- Four major airports: Sofia, Plovdiv, Bourgas and Varna
- Two main seaports: Varna and Bourgas
- Numerous ports at the Danube River

Political and business stability

- Bulgaria is a member of the European Union, NATO and WTO
- The stability of the currency is supported by the currency board, pegging the Bulgarian lev to the euro at the level of 1.96
- Bulgaria has the second-lowest government debt in the European Union (17.0 % of GDP) and one of the lowest budget deficits (2.1%) as of 2011

Low cost of doing business

- Bulgaria has the most favorable tax regime in Europe. Corporate income tax rate is 10%, the lowest in the EU together with Cyprus. Personal income tax is 10 %, flat rate. Industries in high-unemployment areas are granted 0% tax rate
- There is a 2-year VAT exemption for imports of equipment for investment projects over €5 million, creating at least 50 jobs
- Depreciation time for computers and new manufacturing equipment is 2 years
- 5% withholding tax on dividends and liquidation quotas (0% for EU tax residents)
- Bulgaria has one of the most competitive costs of labor in Central and Eastern Europe
- Favorable office rents and low cost of utilities. Bulgarian cost of electricity for industrial users is 70% of the European average

Access to markets
Due to its location Bulgaria provides direct access to the following key markets:

- European Union - zero tariff market with population of 500 million
- CIS – still not well penetrated market with a high potential
- Turkey - zero tariff market of near 80 million population
- Middle East – a market with high purchasing power
- North African market

Human resources

- Work force is well educated, highly skilled and multilingual
- 62.2 % of the total population is in working age (appr. 4.6 million)
- 60 000 students annually graduate from 51 universities
- 98% of the high school students study a foreign language (usually English) and 73% study a second language (mainly German, French, Spanish, Russian)
- 94% of the schools have Internet access
Bulgaria Culture – Click on the icon
Bulgaria Conference and Business tourism – Click on the icon
Bulgaria Eco Tours and Village life – Click on the icon
Discover Bulgaria – Click on the icon
Bulgaria Wine and Cuisine – Click on the icon
Bulgaria Pilgrimage Tourism – Click on the icon
Bulgaria Black Sea Coast – Click on the icon
Bulgaria Balneo, Spa and Wellness Tourism – Click on the icon
Bulgaria Sport – Click on the icon
Bulgaria Winter Tourism – Click on the icon

12. Miscellaneous

Local Time: EET / GMT+3 between late March and late October.
Currency: Bulgarian lev (BGN). It is in fraction of 100 stotinki (singular: stotinka). Coins: 1 and 2 leva; banknotes: 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100 Levs. The exchange rate against the euro is fixed at BGN 1.95 for 1 euro. Exchange rates may vary slightly.
Telecommunications: International code for Bulgaria is +359, for Sofia: +359 2. Main mobile service providers: M-tel, Telenor and Vivacom.
Drinking water: Tap water is safe to drink.
Electricity: Main voltage 220 V/50 Hz, round two-pin plugs.
Driving: Right-side circulation with a valid International Driving Permit. Ride with lights on at all times. The use of seat belts is mandatory for all passengers, except pregnant women. Speed limits are 50 km/h urban, 30 km/h residential areas, 90 km/h outside urban areas and 130 km/h highways.
Common European Emergency Number: 112.