



**Evangelical Friends Mission
Luke 10 Trips**

THE BALKANS EFM Pre- Launch Planning Report

The EFM Luke 10 Pre-Launch Questions report builds a proposal for next steps and logistics in sending short- and long-term missionaries. You do not need to give an answer to every single question in this template. Just tell EFM what you know and what is applicable. Brevity is encouraged. The questions below are intended to inspire documented communication which would allow EFM to send workers to the field with peace of mind.

How do we “launch” a field? Workers or missionaries MOVE TO THE FIELD!

There may be info available in the EFM CAN GO Reports that could be copy and pasted and/or adapted.

1. In a brief sentence for each of the five CAN GO criteria, what is the latest update concerning each: Champion/s, Affirmation, Need, Gifting, and Opportunity/Openness.

Champions:

- Champions: Fred and Jonelle Liddell, Jon Fodge, Patrick Neifert, Soni McGrew, Kathleen Dungan.
- Northwest Yearly Meeting, Board of Global Outreach, churches, and members.
- Bethel Friends in KS, Northridge Friends in KS,
- Several members and churches of Eastern-Region.

Affirmation, & Need:

- Interactions with pastors and missionaries affirmed the needs in the area.
 - Pioneers in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Kat and the Crockers),
 - Greater Europe Mission in Croatia (the Lehns),
 - Operation Mobilization in Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina (the Kavedzics, Jesse McCourtney),
 - Assemblies of God team in Montenegro (Tamara and Jonathan, and a national pastor),
 - Pastors in Mostar (Dalibor, Ben, Karmelo),
 - Pastors in Croatia (Ico, Daniel, Neno, and church elder Niksha)
- In this whole Balkans region, religion is defined by ethnicity and is mostly cultural in practice. Religious identity is held tightly because changing religion means changing your whole identity and risking social and family ostracization and hostility.
 - Bosniaks are generally Muslim, Croats are Catholic, Serbs and Montenegrins are Serbian Orthodox.
- Most larger towns in Bosnia and Herzegovina have at least one Christian worker in them and often a church.
- There are only six churches in Montenegro.
- There are only three churches in the southern region of Croatia.
 - The Croatian pastors and the missionaries highlighted the area around Orebic, Croatia, as a key area with no workers in it currently.
- Ministry Needs:
 - Widespread trauma/PTSD, need for counseling, family/marital support
 - Trebinje (Bosnia and Herzegovina): Lack of community services, health education and resources, modeling of healthy families
 - Dubrovnik (Croatia): Ministering to immigrant low-income workers with irregular schedules, evangelism and discipleship •
 - Orebić (Croatia): Partnering with Pastor Ico initially, relationship building, evangelism and discipleship/ministering to nationals and internationals in area •

Opportunity/Openness

- Many emphasized the need for more workers in the region. The missionaries in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia said “this (your coming) would be an answer to prayer.”
- Pastor Ico near Orebic, said “The fields are ripe for the harvest.” But many emphasized that ministry will take a lot of ground preparation and that it will likely take years or decades to see even a small church planted.
 - There is more legal leniency for evangelism in Croatia than in the surrounding countries.
 - There is the likelihood of resistance to any evangelical work, driven by strong national churches/mosques and the centuries-long social identification with those church/mosques.
- The missionaries in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Montenegro all commented on the importance of treating those countries much like a closed country.
- Cultural Catholics in Croatia may be open to the Bible and discussions of Christ that expand on their current knowledge.

2. Compelling conviction to launch (to build just a short paragraph on top of the CAN GO summary). What is the compelling picture that is worth giving our lives or the lives of our sons and daughters to? How might these peoples or places look different because we paid the price to take holistic Good News? What words would sharpen our Help Wanted sign for this new field?

- This region, marked by anger, unforgiveness, and war related trauma, has very few evangelical believers. The few workers are asking for help. Most towns do not have churches, those that exist are very small (12-25 people), so there are many potential sites for church planting. Though there is a

cultural tradition of Catholicism or Eastern Orthodoxy, it is generally surface level and does not reach to saving faith or confidence of salvation. Help Wanted: Need for gifts of evangelism and discipleship, passion for and/or experience in reconciliation ministry/peacemaking, business ownership/management.

3. Strategy : What informal ideas make the most sense at this time for how this mission field will be launched and developed? How does this impact entry strategy?

Keep in mind that ideas for strategy are informal at this stage, as EFM expects that formal strategies will further develop later after missionaries have immersed in the culture for 2 years and discover new insights for input to EFM. So...strategy step one is to get workers/missionaries on the ground for language and culture learning, regardless of what role those workers would have in long term team. (Even workers who are potential missionaries still exploring a call to this place, or shorter term willing to help us create a presence and gather intel).

- Initially, the Liddells plan to enroll in language school in Split, Croatia, February 2026.
 - Enrollment in language school will make it easier to obtain student visas for their initial time in Croatia.
- After language school, the current thought is to focus ministry on the Dalmatian Coast of Croatia, possibly in Orebic.
 - Coordination with pastor, Ico, of a neighboring town church, with a focus on discipleship.
 - Business and ministry opportunities would be explored.
 - Possibility of beginning a community center or camp.
 - Using a “regular” job with secular credentials as an avenue to a visa.
 - Starting a business, possibly a coffee shop, as a bridge to relationships
 - Working under a church, possibly translating Christian materials into Croatian
- With the right giftings, this field could eventually be extended to southwest Bosnia and Herzegovina and/or northern Montenegro.
 - In Bosnia and Herzegovina business would be a good way to gain legitimacy among locals, possibly some form of tech work, tourism work or community development in Trebinje.

4. Visa: What are the visa requirements, and what are our best options? What, if anything, does this mean for strategy or preparation?

- Initially, a short-term visa should be allowed for Liddells’ time in language school.
- Residency/long-term visa requirements are being explored: can be granted on the basis of local employment, business ownership (within certain parameters), establishment of a non-profit (within certain parameters), or enrollment in a university. At this time, we anticipate either getting a job or starting a business or a non-profit community center. It is possible to get a visa if employed by a church, but one would have to actively work at that church. This might be possible with Pastor Ico, as it might be possible to be creative with the nature of “work,” doing something like the translation of Christian materials that could be done remote from the church site.

5. Skill Sets: What are the skill sets that stand out as we look for missionary candidates for this field? How might people in your church hear the opportunity and call, including those who never imagined themselves as “missionaries.” How might the call for workers help people discover that their life or work experiences, character and interests fit into the missionary team/s? Young adults? Mid-career? Retired? Long term? One to two years of service?

The Balkans region would benefit from having workers with qualities of:

- Perseverance, the ability to minister even when isolated.
 - Christian workers are scattered and may be several hours away.
- Counseling, especially with secular qualifications
 - There is PTSD from war and trauma. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, everyone over the age 30 was involved in or affected in some way by war.
- Reconciliation ministry
 - There is constant tension between ethnic groups once at war with each other. There are deep ethnic/religious divides, with suspicion and hostility toward neighboring groups.
- Building healthy families
 - Ability to give health education and resources
- Education experience
- Evangelism
 - Discipleship, Bible studies, translation of Christian materials into Croatian
- Business, digital nomad.
 - Business is a good way to get long-term visas, digital nomads/remote work is a good way to get temporary visas (1 year)
- Camping ministry or retreat center management as a possible business
- Tech or healthcare skills
- Willingness to keep a night shift schedule, to reach international workers who have nocturnal schedules.

6. Language Learning: First term missionary's objectives will focus on language and culture learning through immersion. What relationships and connections might be available for language helpers for language learning through immersion? Are there formal language school options that should be considered? How much will these options cost? How does this impact what city or neighborhood they start?

- A language school in the city of Split, Croatia, has been identified as a good starting place.
 - Entry into this school will allow a student visa, which will allow residency in the country throughout the language program. Cost: 570 euros per semester plus cost of language helper/tutor if wanted/needed.
- Frequent weekend visits to Orebic (the target ministry start location) will allow language "practice" and hopefully bonding with the residents there.

7. Location: Where will our missionaries live? What is the region, specific city, or neighborhood?

- While in language school, Liddells plan to live in the city of Split, Croatia, or a neighboring small town/village.
 - Locations and logistics are being explored and should be clarified on the next visit in November 2025.
- The current plan is for them to eventually move to Orebic and find a house or apartment there.

8. Lifestyle: What will the missionary lifestyle look like for their first term of culture and language learning immersion? Will they have a car or use public transportation? Will they live on their own or with someone else?

- Language school in the city of Split will take up much of the first 2 years of living in Croatia.
 - Metropolitan Split has about 330,000 people and is a major transportation hub, cruise ship port, and a popular tourist destination.
- The pre-launch logistics trip in November 2025 will be used for identifying housing, schooling, and transportation options
 - It is expected that Liddells will need a car when living in Croatia.

- They will have 2 children who need car seats.
- They will need the freedom to frequently visit Orebic, their intended ministry destination, and also visit potential missionary contacts several hours away.

9. Spiritual Issues: What are the significant spiritual issues in the area? How does this impact missionary self-care and support in this particular environment (i.e. coping strategies)?

- There is much anger and hostility among the people of different ethnicities and religions. There is need for peace, forgiveness, and reconciliation.
- Word from a former missionary to Orebic is that there is much spiritual oppression there. She specifically mentioned spiritual warfare directed at their marriage.
- Every missionary we spoke to mentioned the struggle with spiritual/emotional isolation and how many missionaries come into this area and leave within two years. We believe teams are vital to counter this, and maintaining spiritual disciplines from the very beginning. Regular visits to other Christian workers in the region also seems wise both for our own missionaries' self care and to help support others going through the same thing.
- There has been an influx of Muslims from the Middle East into the Bosniak areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina, bringing a more extreme form of Islam

10. Missionary Care: What needs considered for missionary care in the first term of language learning and culture bonding. What support is required? What pace and rhythms should be considered in this immersion context? Where will the missionary/s go for respite? Are there needs for on-site short- or long-term missionary support personnel? What support or camaraderie already exists in the area of service? What options are there for children's education (if applicable)?

Missionaries serving in the Balkans will need:

- Culture acclimation (getting over culture shock)
- Prayer support both locally and from home.
 - Yearly prayer trips from supporters would be welcomed
- To develop local Christian relationships and a sustained prayer/support community.
- Coaching from experienced missionaries.
- Support for young families: Financial advice, a support system for health benefits, schooling, daycare, etc.
 - Schooling and childcare options will be explored during the November 2025 logistics trip. Appears likely that public school will be the best option long term.
- Rest and retreat options: Possible locations include other European countries close enough for respite. (Split is a popular port for cruise ships and has access to an international railway.) Possibilities: Visits to EFM workers in Ireland or Hungary, friends from other agencies in nearby countries, many small towns within a few hours but outside the region that could be good places to retreat and rest.
- MTI recommends 7-20 hours a week for language learning, for 18-36 months.
 - Language class will be about 3-6 hours a week.
 - We will need a native speaking, language helper.

EFM provides for each missionary: an EFM Coach, a Missionary Care Team, and a Language Learning Coach.

11. Teams: It is natural to ask "what if" we have one missionary household ready to deploy but we don't have others identified or ready. There are many ways to define teams and each context/scenario will impact the way EFM would have "peace of mind" short or long term in the process of launching and building/developing healthy thriving teams and mission strategy long term. Please identify what missionary or ex-pat personnel outside of EFM are working (or planning to work) in the area of this new field location who

could serve as interim or long term “team” support to EFM worker/s. Briefly explain current status of relationship with these persons.

- Soni McGrew from Portland, Oregon, and Kathleen Dungan from Canton, Ohio are praying about joining the Liddells as team members in Croatia.
- Christian connections and possible churches in Split, Croatia, will be explored on the November 2025 logistics trip. Have contact information for two pastors there.
- Pastor Ico is from a town about an hour away from Orebic and has expressed willingness to work with EFM missionaries.
- Several missionaries from Pioneers, Greater Europe Mission, and Operation Mobilization are within 2-6 hours away from Orebic.
- We are praying for additional team members.

12. Support Budget: What will the major field expenses be during the first term? Housing? Language helper and/or language classes? Transportation? Any insights concerning income levels and lifestyle in the area of service? What else?

- The city of Split has a public bus system for the city and surrounding area. There is railway service to nearby countries.
- Housing costs and options will be explored on the November 2025 pre-launch logistics trip, but are anticipated to be high. Looking at possible cheaper housing near Split, as city COL is climbing.
- Language school will be set cost, we anticipate supplementing with language helpers at least during the summer (when there is no language school) and probably less frequently during the semester as well.
- A car should be in the proposed budget for travel with children to Orebic and other possible ministry locations.

13. Possible Missionaries: Who are possible missionary candidates for this field that we should be talking with and preparing? This includes people who don’t have traditional “call” but are willing and able to serve within EFM’s missionary qualifications and within context of type of service.

- Single women; Soni McGrew from Portland, Oregon, and Kathleen Dungan from Canton, Ohio are praying about joining the Liddells as team members in Croatia.

14. Partnerships and relationships with other organizations, or collaborations with other regions/yearly meetings in the U.S.

- Northwest Yearly Meeting and several churches in Eastern Region are supportive of this field.
- Missionaries with Pioneers, Greater Europe Mission, and with Operation Mobilization work in the Balkans region, but mostly in Bosnia.

NOTE: We are not intending to write comprehensive partnership proposals at this point, rather in brief, note key points concerning potential partnerships and what we know at this point.

- Partnerships: Continue to connect in conversation with partner yearly meetings on other continents or partner organizations that have emerged. Name organization and basic summary of why partner with them. As we think about a potential partnership agreement proposal in 2025 (fifth stage), identify summary of what kind of expectations we may have of each other in order to strengthen each other’s mission goals? Identify where our expectations and their expectations of the partnership align, and where they differ and need further conversation. What plans have been made or need to be made to develop a proposal (specific dates and places are welcome if applicable).

- **Relationships:** What contacts, organizations and connections would we identify as informal relationships where we might receive consultation, encouragement or support? As we think about these relationships, what notes would we write in order to clarify to EFM what the nature of the relationship is (what will each party give, receive or experience in this relationship).
- **Collaborations:** What other regions/yearly meetings in the U.S. have interest in participating with the field's sponsoring region/yearly meeting in the benchmarks for launching and supporting this new mission? Develop clarity for how the regions will work together at this point, and how the collaboration will be assessed and adjusted.

From the Luke 10 Initiative GLOSSARY

Partnerships and Collaborations: Partnership Agreements are to be written by regional field study groups in collaboration with EFM staff to be proposed to the EFM Board for approval (may involve EFM Think Tank). These partnerships may be "works in progress" in this journey.

- **Multinational partnerships** with international sending yearly meetings. These occur when EFM and a missions-sending board in another yearly meeting outside of the U.S. endeavor to both send missionaries to work together to start/oversee a mission field together.
- **Partnerships with organizations** with whom we may collaborate with in launching the mission. These occur when EFM works formally with an organization in order to accomplish the goals of the mission. We wish to have expectations from both parties summarized in writing for clarity. This does not include informal 'relationships' or 'friendships' with other organizations or missionaries who we may consult with or collaborate in a strictly relational capacity.

Inter-regional/yearly meeting collaboration within EFC-NA is encouraged to build capacity in the EFM family of churches. This occurs when one or more regions/yearly meetings within the U.S. create an intentional relationship with the sponsoring yearly meeting of a new field in order to help accomplish benchmarks.

15. What are other insights, questions, concerns, points which need to be noted and remembered?