

CROSSING THE CONTACT LINE: March 2020 Snapshot

As part of measures aimed at stopping the spread of the COVID-19, the JFO Headquarters limited EECOP operation in two steps. Since 17 March, people could cross only in the direction of their residence registration ("propiska") – NGCA or GCA. In some cases, the SBGS allowed to cross if a person had an urgent issue (family separation, critical medical condition, etc.). Since 22 March, GCA EECOPs fully suspended passing of people while de-facto authorities did it a day earlier. Therefore, some people passed the GCA EECOP but were not allowed to enter on the NGCA side and had to return.

Due to the restrictions, some people could not cross the contact line despite having sufficient reasons for crossing and relevant residence registration. As a result, on all EECOPs by the end of March people have been stranded for days, in many cases without the financial means for temporary accommodation. The most urgent situation occurred at Stanytsia Luhanska EECOP: over 40 people have been waiting on the GCA side, unable to cross the contact line. Meanwhile, people waiting at Maiorske EECOP, were provided with accommodation and food by local authority and NGOs.

From the end of February and throughout March due to the threat of spread of COVID-19 SBGS servicemen had continued to carry out temperature screening of the crossing people at all EECOPs before they were closed. All cases of temperature detection of 37.9 or higher and severe acute respiratory syndrome symptoms were recorded by SBGS servicemen, people received reminders about the need for self-isolation.

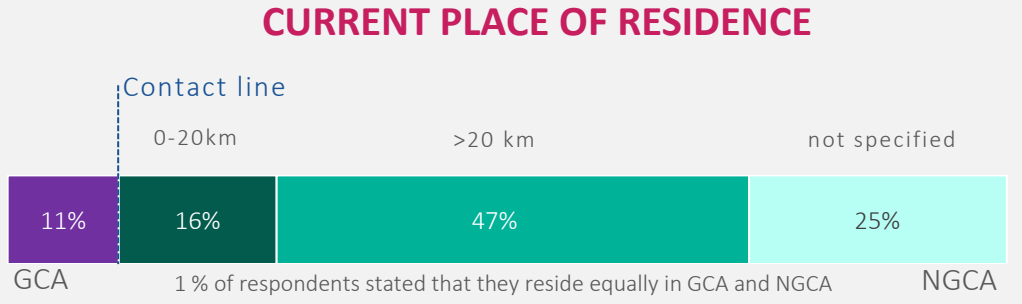
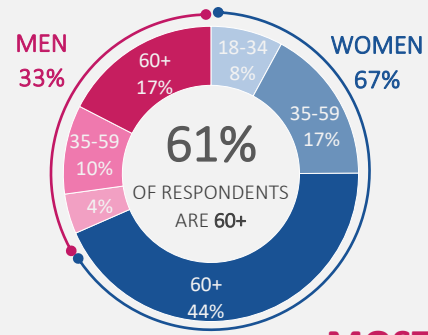
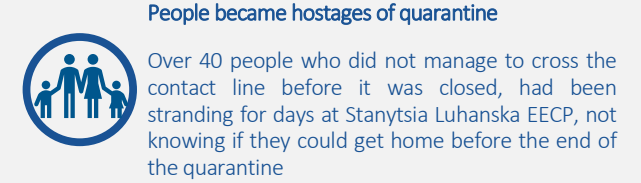
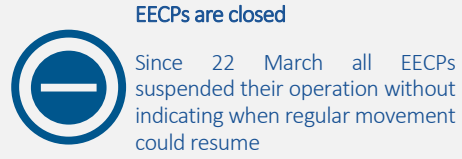
During the period 1-17 of March, 18,077 vulnerable elderly persons were provided with transportation support at Stanitsa Luhanska EECOP by NGO Proliska electric vehicle. As of 17 March, transportation services were suspended due to imposing the quarantine measures. Most services suspended their work at EECOPs since 17-20 March at all EECOPs: the Coordination Group representatives, INGO medical representatives, and transportation, including a social bus at Stanytsia Luhanska.

¹The findings of the monitoring should not be directly extrapolated to the entire population.

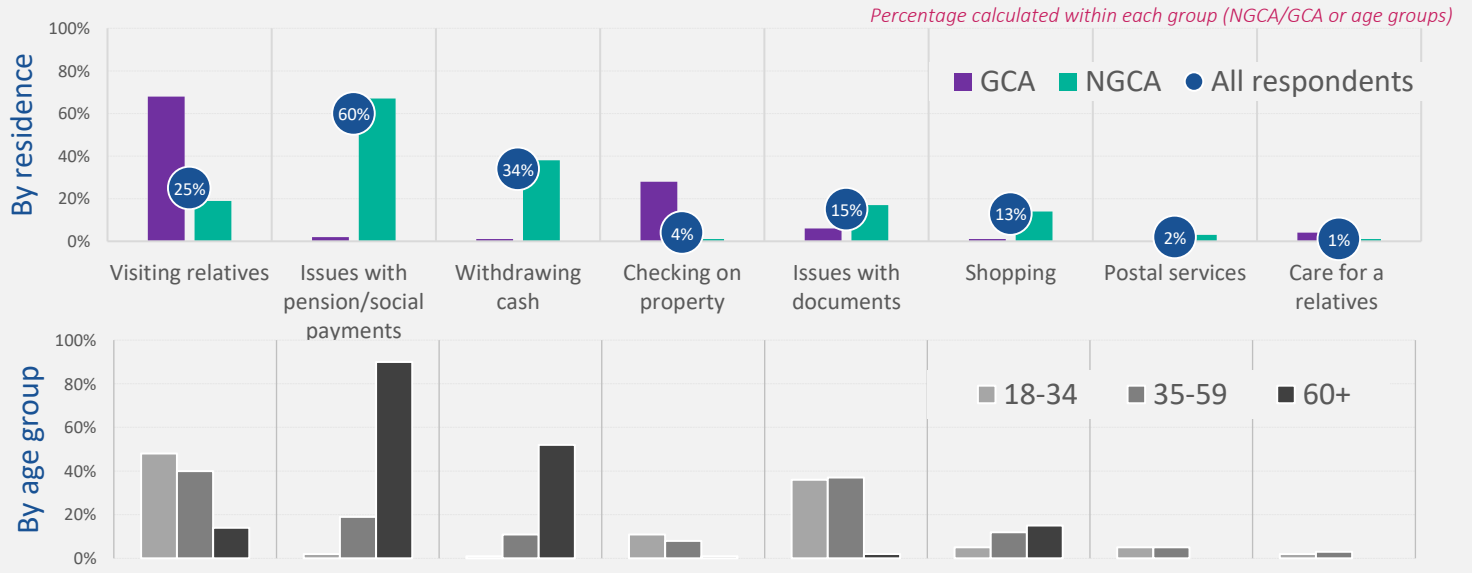
593,000 CROSSINGS



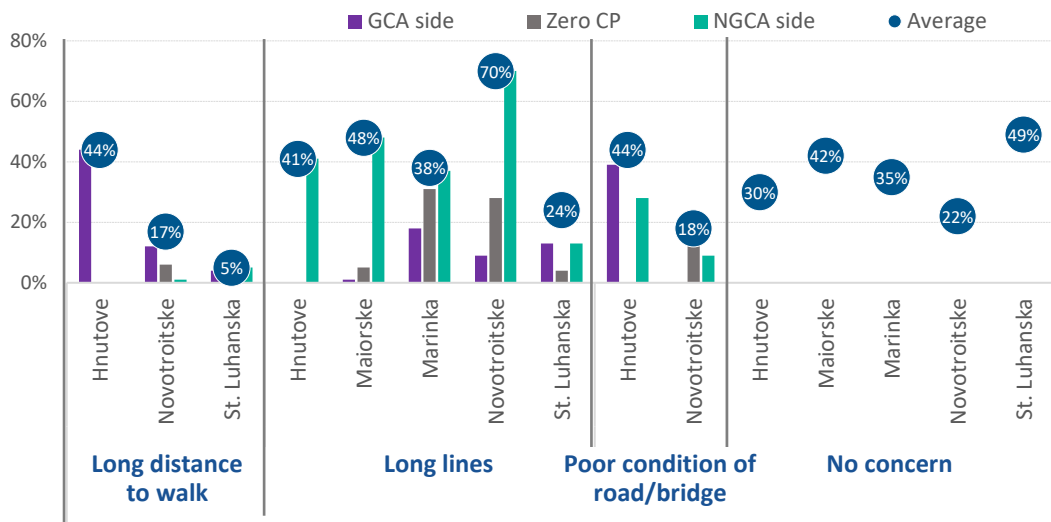
More statistical data is available on the Eastern Ukraine Checkpoint Monitoring Online Dashboard: <https://www.unhcr.org/ua/en/eecp-monitoring-2020>



MOST FREQUENT REASONS FOR CROSSING



MAIN CONCERNS WHILE CROSSING



DURATION OF CROSSINGS OF THE PAST 3 MONTHS

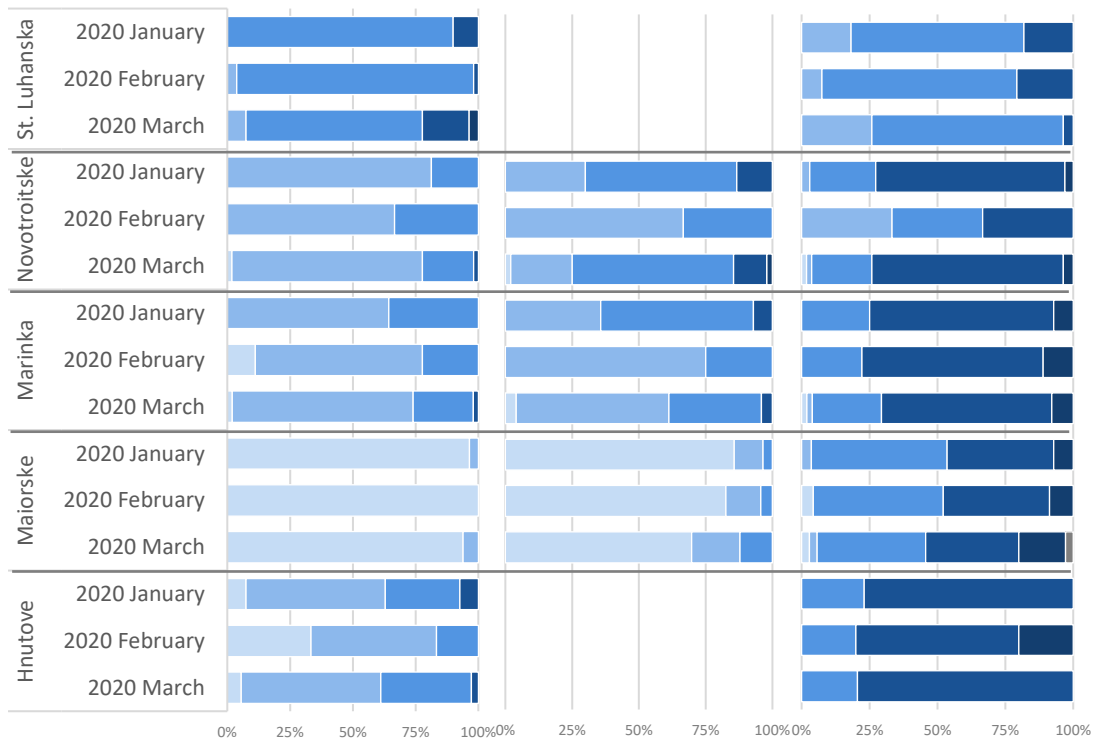
(Cumulative for 2020 respondents)

0.0-0.5 hour 0.5-1 hour 1-2 hours 2-3 hours 3-4 hours 4-5 hours 5+ hours

GCA side

Zero CP

NGCA side



INCIDENTS AND CASUALTIES AT EECPs

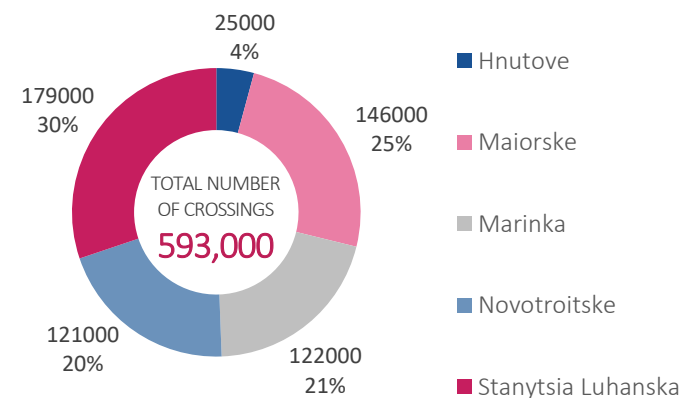
- On 11 March, a woman born in 1953 died at Maiorske EECP due to health complications. At 15.30, she lost consciousness, "ASAP RESCUE" representatives began to conduct cardiopulmonary resuscitation, but were unable to save her.
- According to the information received from SBGS, a man born in 1950, moving in the car from NGCA side died on 14 March, in the vicinity of Novotroitske EECP, getting out of the car, he fainted, fell down and hit his head.
- At Novotroitske EECP (GCA side) on 4 March an elderly woman with Parkinson's disease had an exacerbation as a result of a nervous breakdown while servicemen checking her luggage. PUI provided the necessary assistance, the woman's condition improved; the R2P monitor accompanied her to the bus.
- At Maiorske EECP (GCA side) on 4 March, a woman who was waiting for a permit to cross the contact line had a stroke. Representatives of "ASAP RESCUE" provided the necessary assistance and took her to the Central Hospital of Bakhmut for further hospitalization.

OBSERVATIONS

- At the end of March, the hygienic condition of toilets at all EECPs remains an urgent problem: the lack of soap, paper towels and toilet paper (especially given the spread of COVID-19, for the prevention of which you need to wash your hands with soap or treat them with antiseptics). In the last week of March, the sanitary system at Marinka EECP was not working due to a broken pump. A similar issue was observed at Novotroitske EECP: sewage pits were overfilled, and wastewater flowed into the neighboring fields.
- Marinka EECP needs a wheelchair, especially given the restrictions on crossing the contact line: previously, persons with reduced mobility mainly used the services of private carriers, whereas now they were forced to get on buses and move around the territory of the EECP by foot.
- A table for filling out applications provided by UNHCR was set up near the Coordination Group booths at Maiorske EECP; a shed was stretched above the table to protect it from the weather.

NUMBER OF CROSSINGS²

In March 2020, the number of crossings decreased by **386,000** in comparison to February (the total number of crossings was **979,000**) due to the closure of EECPs on 22 March.



² General statistics on crossings are available at the UNHCR dashboard visualizing data from the State Border Guard Service. <https://goo.gl/TZbU8c>