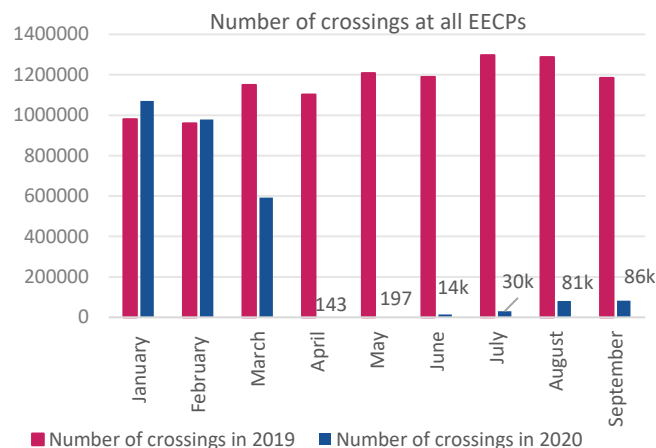


# CROSSING THE CONTACT LINE: September 2020 Snapshot

## NUMBERS AND TRENDS

- During the month, crossing the contact line remained possible only through two EECPs, at a level considerably below the pre-COVID period. The number of crossings remains approximately the same: **nearly 81,000 in August and 86,000 in September.**



- Changes in the rules for crossing the contact line and transportation of goods have been introduced at the end of September by de-facto authorities in Luhansk oblast:

Residents of NGCA in Luhanska oblast can now only cross Stanytsia Luhanska EECP towards GCA and back to NGCA **once a month.**

NGCA regulations on transportation of goods through EECP are now similar with GCA rules. Three different categories of goods have been defined: allowed without limitation, allowed with limitation, prohibited. The transportation of goods for commercial purposes is prohibited.

- Since 18 September, people have no longer spent the nighttime in the SES tents at Novotroitske EECP. With the initiative of Donetsk Oblast State Administration, people who await the crossing in the SES tent now are asked to move to a Socio-Psychological rehabilitation centre in Druzhkovka.

- Every day up to 10 persons stayed for one night under a shed in the neutral area at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP: they were not allowed to return home to the NGCA by de-facto authorities, as people had no confirmation of NGCA residence registration. Thereafter, some of them managed to provide certificates from a house maintenance company confirming their NGCA residence registration.

- People continued to face problems with installing and running the app “Act at Home” at Novotroitske and Stanytsia Luhanska EECPs. Sometimes the app gets overloaded, and users are requested to activate the app later. Also, an error window pops up after entering a mobile number. Smartphones with an operating system older than Android 4.4 are unable to install the app.

- At least **400 people** were provided with help from R2P monitors in the installing and running the app “Act at home”. Moreover, R2P monitors have assisted about **200 people with getting a permission** for crossing from the Coordination Group.

- During September, **16,147 vulnerable elderly persons were provided with transport support at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP** by NGO Proliska e-vehicle.

## LUHANSKA OBLAST

- In Luhanska oblast, **over 39,000 people crossed the contact line to GCA and over 44,000 people to NGCA at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP** in September. At Stanytsia Luhanska EECP, people who want to cross the contact line to NGCA need a residence registration in NGCA Luhanska oblast, as per an interim measure by de-facto authorities.

- The situation with observation in Luhanska oblast: **there are no vacant places in observation points.** Thus, in case if person did not manage to install the app, s/he is not allowed to cross the contact line to GCA, and has to return to NGCA.

## DONETSKA OBLAST

- Three out of four EECPs in Donetsk oblast remain closed. Novotroitske EECP remains the only EECP in Donetsk oblast where it is possible to cross the contact line based on lists established by de-facto authorities of NGCA. The passage of people is conducted every Monday and Friday. **In total 675 people were authorized to cross to GCA in Donetsk oblast. In turn, 1,759 people crossed the contact line to NGCA in Donetsk oblast.** The number of people crossing the contact line to GCA at this EECP **decreased** in September compared to August: 675 and 1026 respectively. The process of crossing is the same as it was in the previous month: people need to be placed on a list, compiled by de-facto authorities in NGCA. It entails a complex procedure of document submission, including writing an application to the NGCA “Emergency headquarters for fighting the spread of COVID-19” via an email or Telegram. In addition, people who crossed the EECP to GCA report that they were required to sign a document at the NGCA checkpoint stating that they will not return to NGCA until the end of quarantine there.

- People who do not have the ability to install the app “Act at home”, have to go to the observation point in Hostre settlement in Donetsk oblast. Conditions in the observation have improved significantly: ICRC provides those people with food supplies. Also, people have the opportunity to pass a free COVID-test with NGO “Doctors without borders”. If it is negative, they can be free from observation.

- People who cross to NGCA had to undergo two-week mandatory observation upon crossing the checkpoint to NGCA. **According to information received from our beneficiaries,** it is now possible to take a COVID-test at EECP on the NGCA in Donetsk oblast and then proceed with self-isolation regime instead of mandatory observation. The cost of the test is 1750 rubles.

\* (N)GCA – (non-)government-controlled areas; EECP – entry-exit checkpoint; SES - State Emergency Service;

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