

CROSSING THE CONTACT LINE: AUGUST 2021 Snapshot

As in previous months **crossing the contact line remained possible only through two of the seven Exit-Entry Crossing Points (EECPs)**: Novotroitske in Donetsk Oblast and Stanytsia Luhanska in Luhanska Oblast. Numbers of people crossing remained much lower than pre-COVID times. According to Joint Forces Operation data and R2P monitoring, in August about **70,000 people** crossed the contact line, the same level as in July. The other five **EECPs have remained closed** on the NGCA side since July 2020. De facto authorities cite anti COVID-19 measures as the reason to keep the other EECPs closed.

The resolution 787 dated 28 July 2021 came into force on 5 August, 2021. According to it, **travellers entering Ukraine are generally required to self-isolate for ten days** except for those in certain categories. The installation of the smart phone GEO-tracing app Vdoma has become a mandatory requirement again (for the first time since May 2020). Those who cannot install the Vdoma app are subject to observation in a state run facility. If a person crossing from NGCA has been invited to receive a COVID-19 vaccine in Ukraine, self-isolation is not necessary.

During August, **9,029 vulnerable elderly persons** were transported across the Stanytsia Luhanska EECP by an electric vehicle provided by the NGO Priliska.

For details on sample and other statistics from the survey visit Eastern Ukraine Checkpoint Monitoring Online Dashboard: <https://www.unhcr.org/ua/en/eecp-monitoring-2021>



303 individuals were surveyed by R2P in August¹. Among them: 64% were women and 36% were men.



Since 5 August, the installation of Vdoma has become a requirement again.



Issues with permits were the main concern expressed by people crossing EECPs.



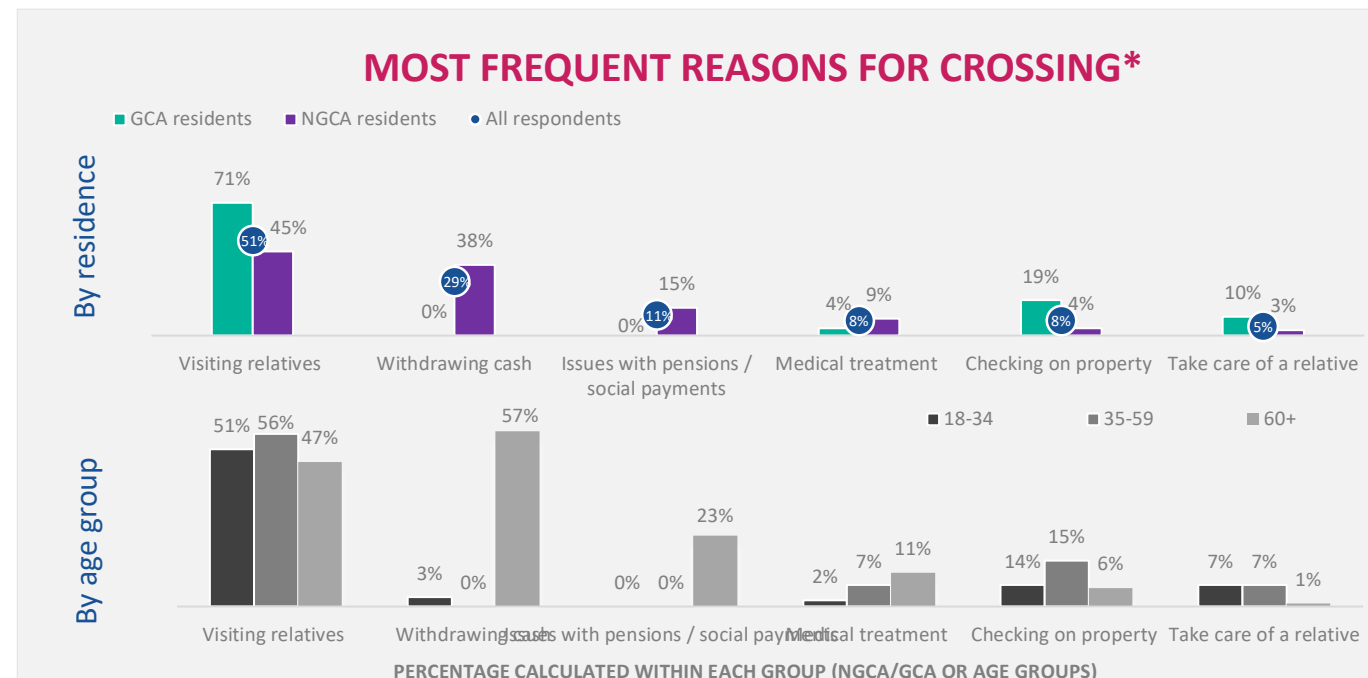
R2P facilitated 572 requests for crossing through the fast-track procedure and assisted about 1,400 persons with installing Vdoma app.



On 2 August, a bus with people arrived from NGCA to Novotroitske EECP at the end of the working day. The work of EECP was extended.



Main reason for crossing was visiting relatives. NGCA residents also came for withdrawing cash.



¹The findings of the monitoring should not be directly extrapolated to the entire population. * Respondents could select several options

*(N)GCA – (non-)government-controlled areas

EECP – entry-exit checkpoint

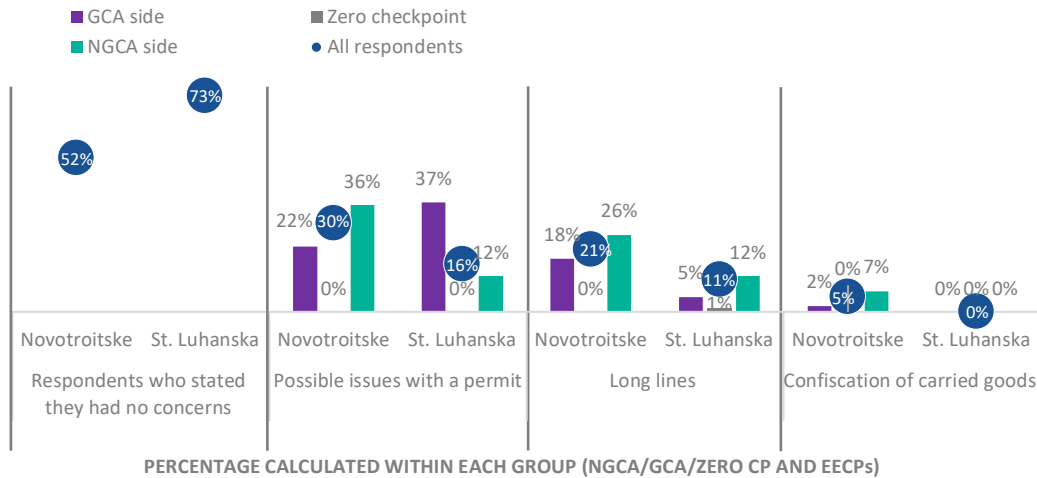
NGO - non-government organization

PCR - Polymerase chain reaction

UNHCR and the NGO Right to Protection (R2P) are grateful for the generous support provided by donors, including the European Union's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO); the Governments of Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom (DFID), the United States of America (PRM) as well as private citizens who are contributing funds through different UNHCR private associations such as España con ACNUR of Spain and the UNO Flüchtlingshilfe of Germany.

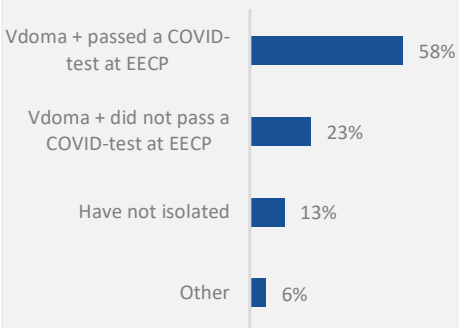
2. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/787-2021-%D0%BF#Text>

MAIN CONCERNS WHILE CROSSING*

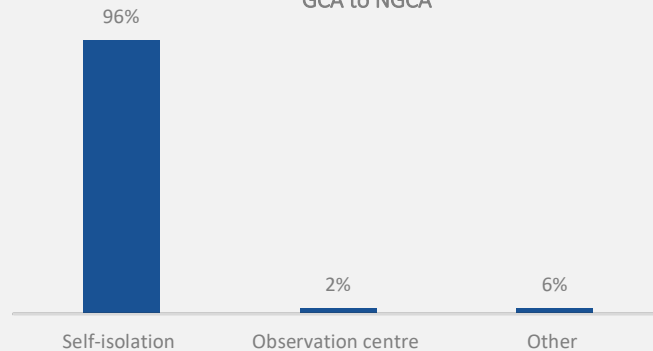


COVID-19 SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

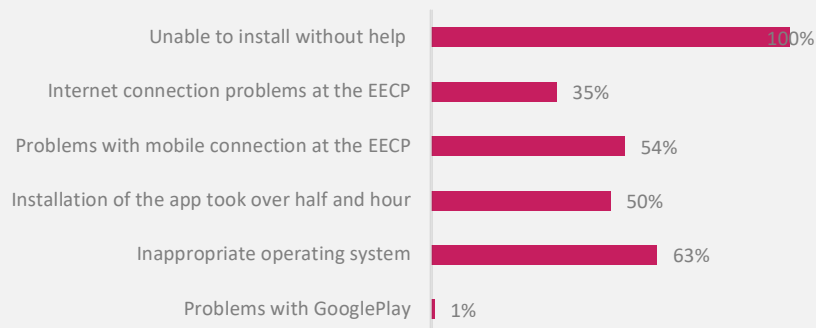
Compulsory isolation after crossing the contact line from NGCA to GCA



Options for isolation after crossing the contact line from GCA to NGCA



Types of difficulties while installing "Vdoma" app



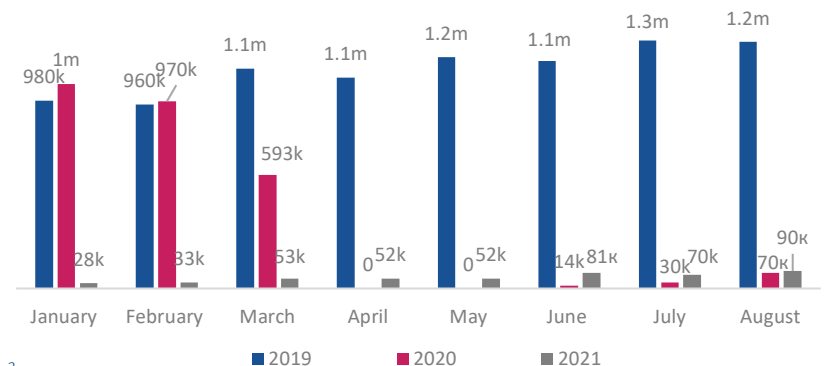
R2P OBSERVATIONS

- In August, **1,139 persons**, **51 per cent** of those who entered GCA via **Novotroitske EECP** took antigen tests for COVID-19 as did **2,289 persons**, **8 per cent** of those who entered GCA via **Stanytsia Luhanska EECP**. Meanwhile, in Donetsk Oblast, **109 people were referred to the observation facility**, because they had no mobile phone or a phone that could not download the Vdoma app. There were no observation facilities in Luhanska Oblast.
- Since **Resolution 787** was adopted, people placed in observation facility in **Hostre settlement** have faced difficult conditions: when R2P team started monitoring the situation and conditions since 6 August, there was no food in the facility until 18 August. The problem was resolved due-to NGO Proliska intervention. Moreover, PCR tests were performed only on Tuesdays, so that people sometimes had to wait for up to a week to be tested.
- As the demand for mobile phone purchases increased, vendors took advantage by adding on and charging for extra phone applications. This problem was solved after R2P intervention.

NUMBER OF CROSSINGS IN AUGUST²

The total number of crossings in August 2021 was **90,860**. Almost 94 per cent of all people crossing between the GCA and the NGCA in August did so through the Luhansk EECP. In Donetsk Oblast, **2,612** people were authorized to cross to the GCA and **3,205** to the NGCA. In Luhanska Oblast, **42,375** people crossed the contact line to the GCA and **42,668** to the NGCA.

Number of crossings at all EECPs



² General statistics on crossings are available at the UNHCR dashboard visualizing data from the State Border Guard Service. <https://goo.gl/TZbU8c>. For the statistics of May 2021, data from Joint Forces Operation were used.