

# CROSSING THE CONTACT LINE:

## October 2021 Snapshot

# 28,205 CROSSINGS

More statistical data is available on the Eastern Ukraine Checkpoint Monitoring Online Dashboard: <https://www.unhcr.org/ua/en/eecp-monitoring-2021>

During October, crossing the contact line remained possible only through two of the seven EECPs: Novotroitske in Donetsk Oblast and Stanytsia Luhanska in Luhanska Oblast. The numbers of people crossing the EECPs are still being affected by COVID-19. The restrictions on the other five EECPs are imposed by de facto authorities as a measure to limit the spread of COVID-19. The number of crossings in October fell by half that of the previous month. According to State Border Guard Service (SBGS) statistics, 28,205 people crossed the contact line in October, compared with 70,000 in September.

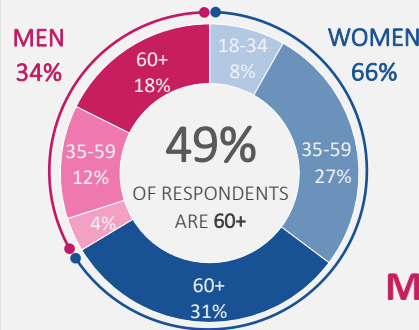
On 9 October, the de facto authorities in the Luhansk NGCA temporarily imposed further restrictions on people crossing Stanytsia Luhanska EECP\* in response to a rise in COVID-19 cases. For one month, they only allowed people to cross the contact line who were registered as permanent residents in their place of destination (GCA residents could return to the GCA and NGCA residents to the NGCA). All others needed permission from the de facto authorities for one or more of the following reasons:

- medical treatment and rehabilitation;
- education;
- caring for a relative;
- burial of a relative.

These restrictions, which led to a significant reduction in the number of people crossing, were lifted on 11 November.

In October, 4,375 vulnerable elderly persons were transported across the Stanytsia Luhanska EECP by an electric vehicle run by the NGO Proliska in cooperation with UNHCR.

<sup>1</sup>The findings of the monitoring should not be directly extrapolated to the entire population.



On October 9, de facto authorities in Luhansk NGCA introduced restrictions for crossing Stanytsia Luhanska EECP. The restrictions were lifted on Nov 11.



Issues with permits continues to be the main concern expressed by people crossing EECPs.



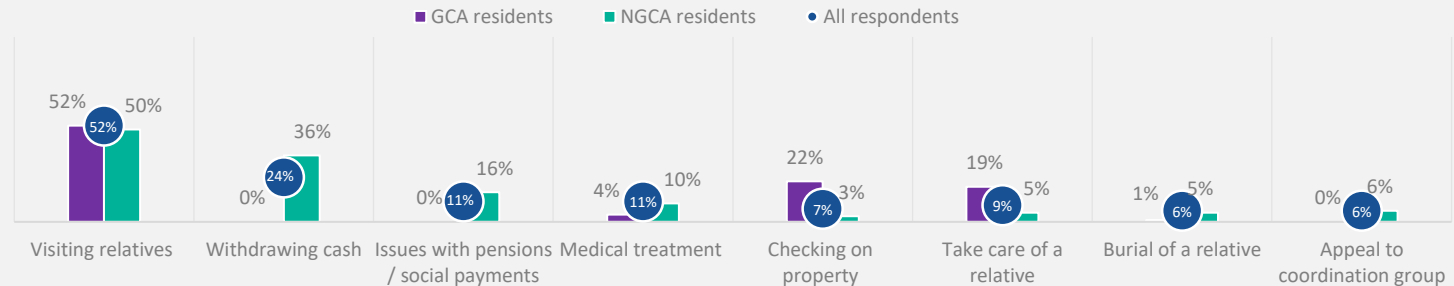
The number of crossings decreased by half compared to the previous month.



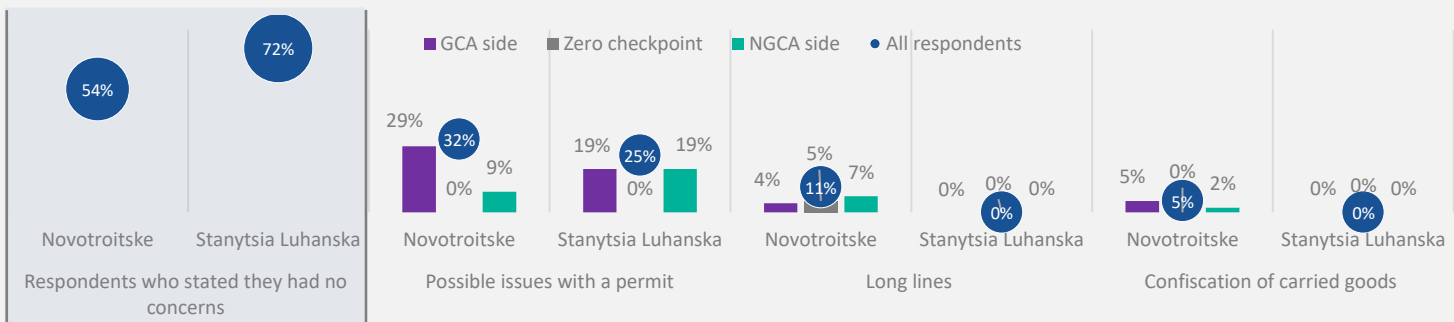
R2P facilitated 278 requests for crossing through the fast-track procedure and assisted about 1,100 persons with installing Vdoma app.

## MOST FREQUENT REASONS FOR CROSSING EECPs

Percentage calculated within each group (NGCA/GCA or age groups)



## MAIN CONCERNS WHILE CROSSING EECPs



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

EECP – entry-exit checkpoint

NGO – non-government organization

PCR - Polymerase chain reaction

SBGS – State Border Guard Service

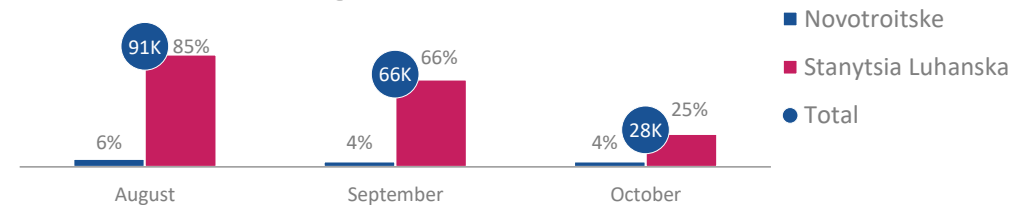
## EECP OBSERVATIONS

- According to the data obtained from the laboratories located at the EECPs, **1,115 persons**, 78 per cent of those who entered GCA via **Novotroitske EECP**, took antigen tests for COVID-19 during October, as did **2,226 persons**, 22 per cent of those who entered GCA via **Stanytsia Luhanska EECP**. Meanwhile, in Donetska Oblast, **24 people** were referred to the **observation facility** because they had no compatible smartphone to install the Vdoma app. There were still no state-run observation facilities in Luhanska Oblast.
- **Visiting relatives** remains NGCA residents' top reason given for crossing the EECPs since October 2020. Seeking **access to banking facilities** and **administrative/social services** (including pension funds) are the other most commonly cited reasons for crossing from the NGCA to GCA areas, as before the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The requirement to download the **Vdoma** app continues to be a problem for half those who were asked, especially people aged 60+ (18 per cent of all respondents).

## NUMBER OF CROSSINGS AT EECPs

Crossings in October, fell to one third of the August figure and under half of those in September. In Donetska Oblast, **1,459** people crossed to the GCA and **2,209** went to the NGCA. In Luhanska Oblast, **9,921** people entered the GCA and **14,616** crossed to the NGCA.

Number of crossings within three months\*

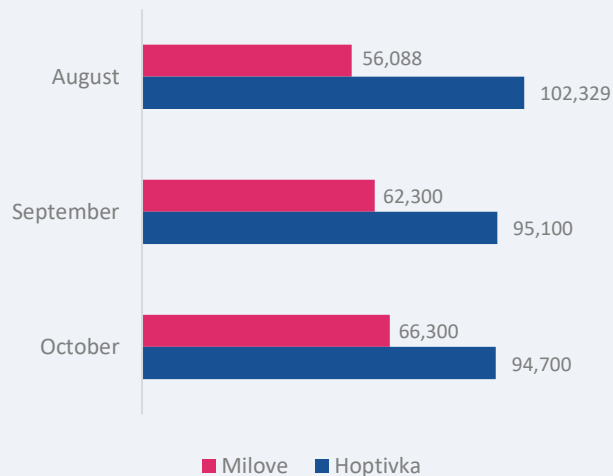


\*General statistics on crossings are available at the [UNHCR dashboard visualizing data from the State Border Guard Service](https://www.unhcr.org/ua/en/resources/checkpoints-crossings). <https://www.unhcr.org/ua/en/resources/checkpoints-crossings>



## GOING AROUND THE CONTACT LINE:

Number of crossings at Milove and Hoptivka IBCPs (citizens of Ukraine only)\*



## IBCP OBSERVATIONS



Crossings through the international border crossing point (IBCP) at Milove in Luhanska Oblast have risen by about 4,000 per month since August. R2P monitors in October noticed more cars with Luhansk number plates, which may indicate that some NGCA residents were there to get round the temporary restrictions at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP after 9 October. R2P monitors also observe very few NGCA residents being fined. NB: Numbers of those crossing the IBCP include all Ukrainians, including those unconnected to the NGCA.



Reconstruction work (new asphalt and street lights) continued at Milove IBCP. In addition, UNHCR installed shelters and prefabricated modules.



Lack of shelters, severe weather conditions and infrequent bus services at Hoptivka IBCP make the trip for pedestrians there arduous. Yet, Hoptivka has more crossings than Milove because it is near to Kharkiv, Ukraine's second largest city.



278 people were sent to the observation facility in October at Milove, compared with 98 people in September.

\* Statistics on crossings IBCPs were obtained from the State Border Guard Service

