

# CROSSING THE CONTACT LINE:

## March 2021 Snapshot

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>

- This month, **crossing the contact line remained possible only through two EECPs**: Novotroitske in Donetsk Oblast and Stanytsia Luhanska in Luhanska Oblast, at a level considerably below the pre-COVID period. **The number of people** crossing the contact line **increased** in March compared to February by 37 percent: 52,823 and 33,000 respectively.
- On 18 March, **Stanytsia Luhanska EECP was finally provided with free rapid antigen tests**, and a state laboratory point was deployed. The large flow of people exceeded the available capacities, which resulted in long queues. Therefore, many people preferred to take a paid PCR test from either of five different trailers of private laboratories.
- There were no places in the observation facility in Luhansk Oblast still. In March, in Donetsk Oblast, **40 people were sent to the observation facility**, all of them either had an inappropriate phone model or no phone at all. Also, **771 persons who crossed to GCA at Novotroitske EECP (81 percent) took the rapid antigen test**, and 754 persons at Stanytsia Luhanska (one percent).
- In line with R2P advocacy, on 22 March, amendments were made to Resolution #1236 on quarantine COVID-19 measures that greatly facilitated the crossing procedure for foreigners. **Therefore, foreigners who have a permanent residence in Ukraine do not need to have insurance when crossing the contact line to GCA.**
- During March, **3,657 vulnerable elderly persons were provided with transport support at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP** by the NGO “Proliska” e-vehicle.



**711 individuals** were surveyed by R2P in March. Among them: **60 percent** were women and **40 percent** were men



**Rapid antigen became finally available** at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP



**Issues with permits and authorisations are the main concerns** of people when crossing EECP



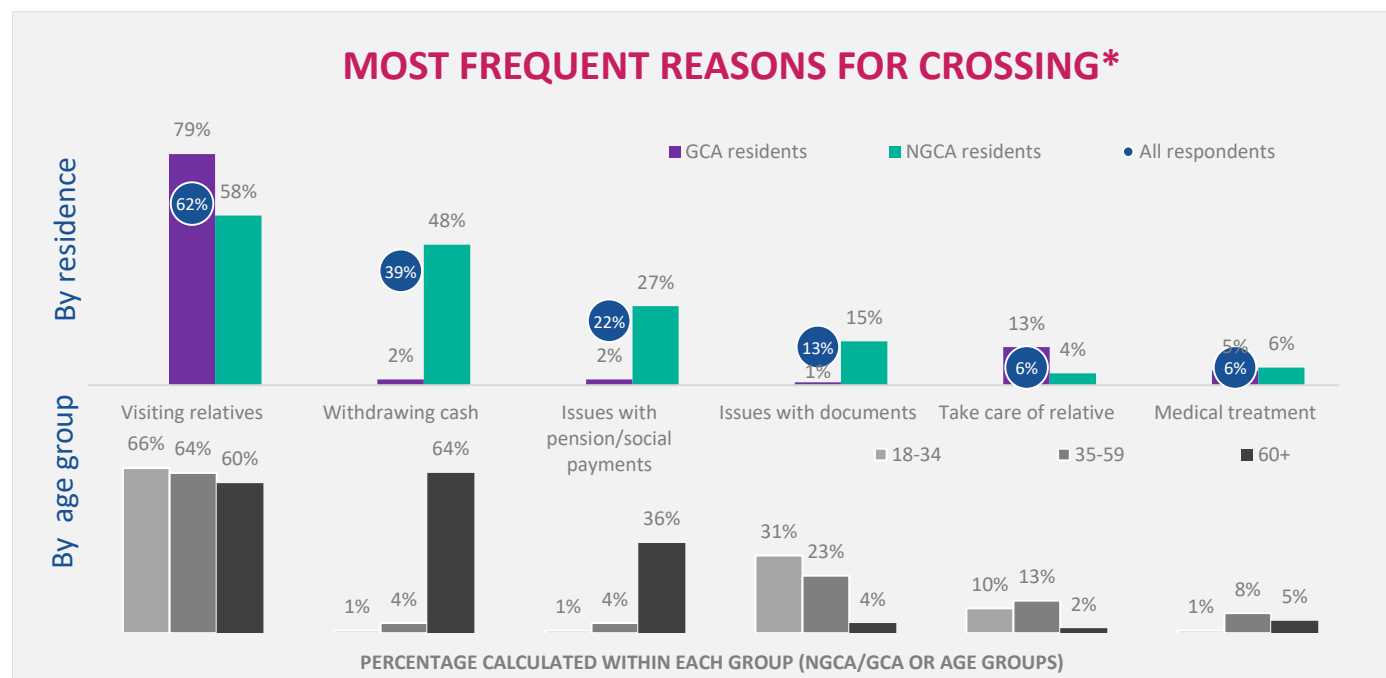
R2P facilitated **207 requests** for crossing through the fast-track procedure and assisted about **1200 persons with installing “Vdoma” app**



**81 percent (771)** of people who crossed to GCA passed **free rapid antigen tests for COVID-19** at Novotroitske EECP and **one percent (754)** at Stanytsia Lyhanska EECP



**Main reason for crossing is visiting relatives.** NGCA residents also come for banking, pensions and social payments



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

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

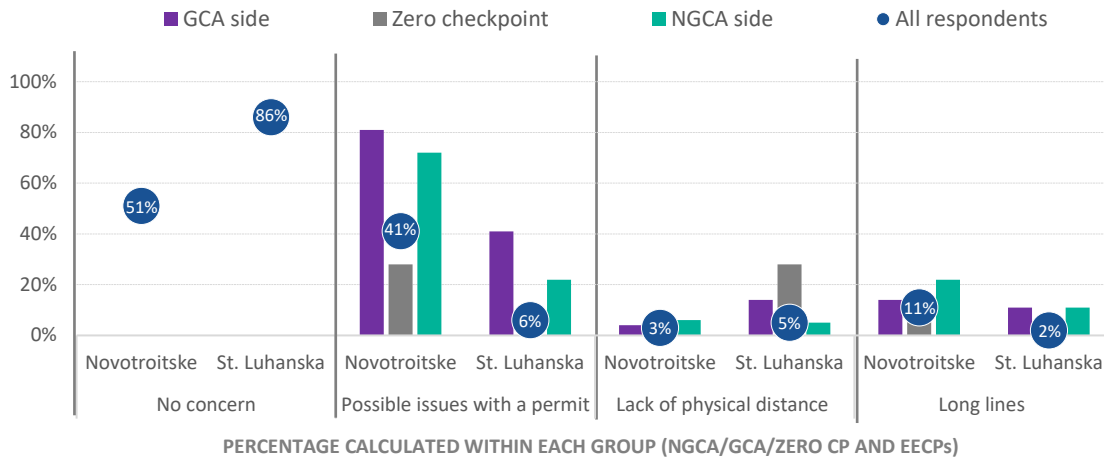
EECP – entry-exit checkpoint

NGO - non-government organization

PCR - Polymerase chain reaction

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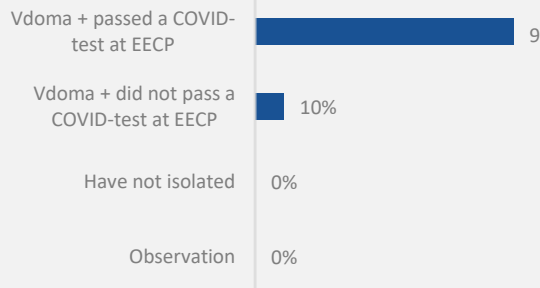
## MAIN CONCERNS WHILE CROSSING\*



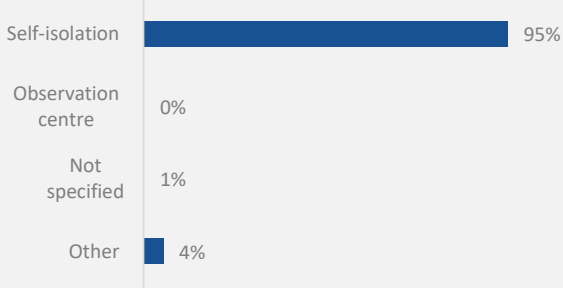
## COVID-19 SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

The data presented in these graphs relate to the respondent's previous experience of crossing the contact line

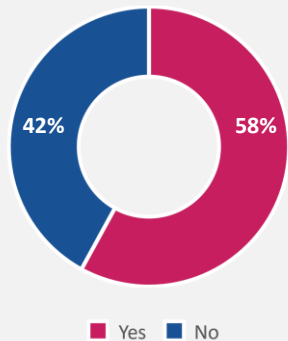
Options for compulsory isolation after crossing the contact line from NGCA to GCA



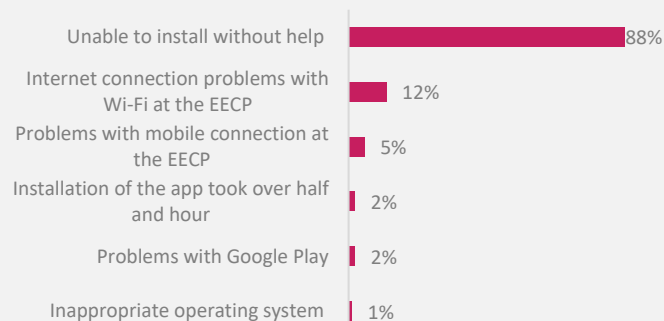
Options for isolation after crossing the contact line from GCA to NGCA



Difficulties while installing "Vdoma" app



Types of difficulties while installing "Vdoma" app\*



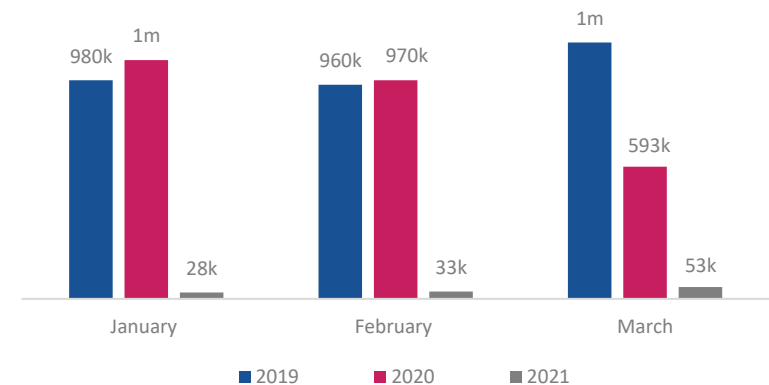
## OBSERVATIONS

- The majority of people who confirmed being concerned when crossing EECPs mentioned possible issues with permits as their main concern. This reflects a context where conditions for crossings remained seriously restricted as a result of COVID-19, particularly at Novotroitske EECP, due to the complex procedure of crossing. Given the small number of daily crossings, physical distance and long waiting lines were not among priority concerns.
- Visiting relatives remained the most prevalent motive for crossings since October 2020 (see graph page 1). Access to banking facilities and administrative/social services (including pension funds) remained another significant reason for NGCA residents to cross to GCA, as before the COVID-19 restrictions. Prior to the COVID-19 restrictions, visiting properties was one of the main reasons for GCA residents to go to NGCA. However, under current regulation, visiting the property is not among the reasons accepted for crossing to NGCA.

## NUMBER OF CROSSINGS IN MARCH<sup>2</sup>

The total number of crossings in March 2021 was 52,823. In Donetsk Oblast, 945 people were authorized to cross Novotroitske EECP in direction to GCA and 998 to NGCA. At Stanytsia Luhanska EECP in Luhanska Oblast, 25,385 people crossed the contact line to GCA and 25,497 people to NGCA. The procedure of crossing remained unchanged at both EECPs.

Number of crossings at all EECPs



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