

CROSSING THE CONTACT LINE:

November 2021 EECP Survey Snapshot

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

On 5 November, for several hours no one could cross the contact line in Luhansk oblast due to **shelling near the Stanytsya Luhanska checkpoint**, only one of two EECPs still open on both the GCA and the NGCA sides of the line. Then on 24 November the Marinka checkpoint was also shelled. Only exceptional crossings are authorized by NGCA side at Marinka EECP, with **14 crossings reported in November (SBGS statistics)**.

Last month for the first time, travellers crossing Stanytsya Luhanska showed a higher percentage of respondents reporting concerns than those crossing Novotroitske EECP in Donetsk oblast. The proportion in Stanytsya Luhanska jumped from one eighth in September to one quarter in October and November. Raised levels of concern in Luhansk oblast appear to correlate with the temporary anti-Covid restrictions imposed by the Luhansk NGCA from 9 October to 11 November and will probably fall back to September levels from December.

Stanytsya Luhanska EECP is usually open seven days a week. By contrast movement in Donetsk Oblast is more restricted. Novotroitske EECP is only open two days per week, and residents must seek permission from Donetsk NGCA two weeks in advance, giving a humanitarian justification for their request.

In November, **737 persons**, 55 per cent of those who entered the GCA through **Novotroitske EECP**, were tested for COVID-19 as were **2,312 persons**, 14 per cent of those who entered GCA via **Stanytsya Luhanska EECP**. They were tested because they could not install the Vdoma location-aware app on their phones, an acute problem for people crossing the contact line to GCA, especially people aged 60+ and people with serious illnesses.



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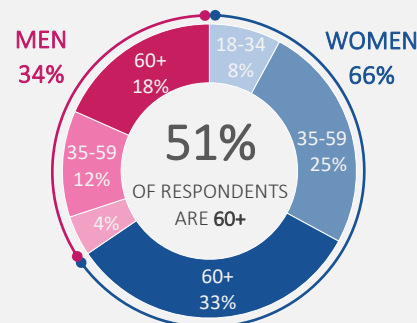
Individuals surveyed by R2P in November at the EECPs



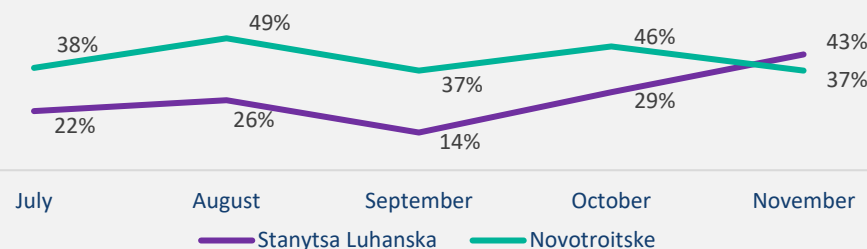
On **November 5**, Stanytsya Luhanska EECP was closed and the crossing was suspended for several hours due to shelling in the vicinity



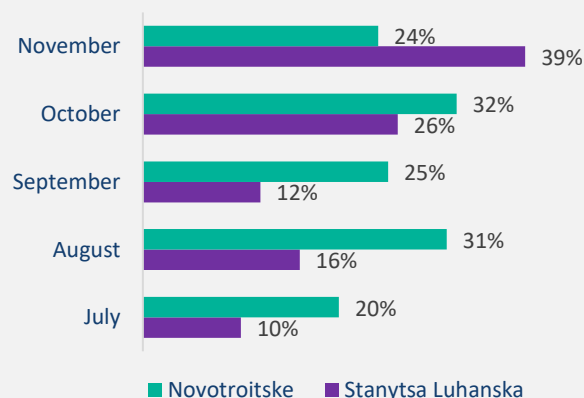
Baggage scanners were installed at Stanytsya Luhanska EECP, that enhanced the crossing procedure.



RESPONDENTS EXPRESSING CONCERNS WHILE CROSSING (by EECP)



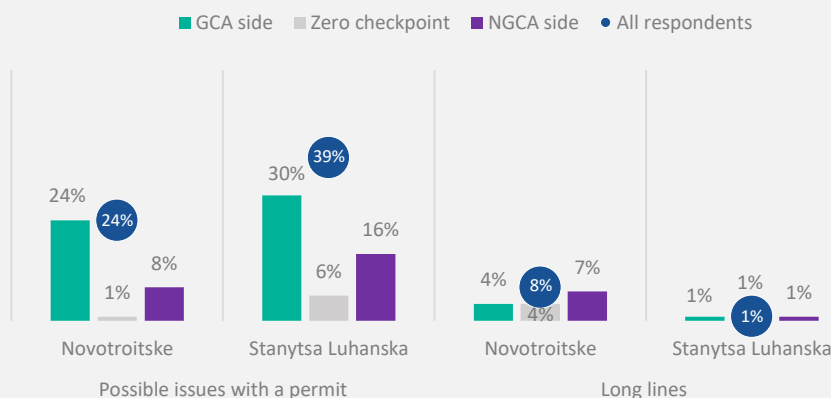
CONCERNS EXPRESSED ABOUT PERMIT ISSUES*



* Percentage calculated within the group of respondents having expressed concerns

TOP TWO CONCERNS IN NOVEMBER*

Percentage calculated within each zone (NGCA/GCA/Zero CP)



* Respondents could select several concerns

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

IBCP- International/interstate border crossing point

EECP – entry-exit checkpoint

NGO – non-government organization

SBGS – State Border Guard Service

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GOING AROUND THE CONTACT LINE:

November 2021 IBCP Survey Snapshot

To reach the GCA, many NGCA residents prefer to make arduous journeys to reach international border crossing points than cross the contact line. They enter or exit Russia through Milove IBCP in Luhansk oblast or Hoptivka IBCP in Kharkiv oblast, because crossing the contact line is now possible only through two EECPs, Novotroitske in Donetsk oblast and Stanytsa Luhanska in Luhansk oblast, both with varying restrictions.

The survey indicates that in November, more residents of Donetsk NGCA crossed both Hoptivka and Milove IBCPs than Luhansk NGCA residents did. Although only a sample was surveyed, tentative inferences can be drawn. Larger numbers from Donetsk NGCA correlate with the tighter restrictions for crossing the Novotroitske EEC in Donetsk oblast.

The travel distances are sometimes enormous. Some respondents said that to travel between the GCA and the NGCA via an IBCP, they had to travel 1,300 km, about same the distance as from Donetsk to Lviv.

Due to the lack of transport at Hoptivka IBCP, between the Russian and Ukrainian border gates, people have to walk 1.2 km on foot. This is especially challenging for the elderly, the sick, and those with heavy luggage.

Nearly all respondents (95%) reported that a typical journey costs from 1,000 to 2,000 UAH (34-68 USD) one way. Others said they spent 3,000 and even up to 4,000 UAH (109-143 USD) for their journey .

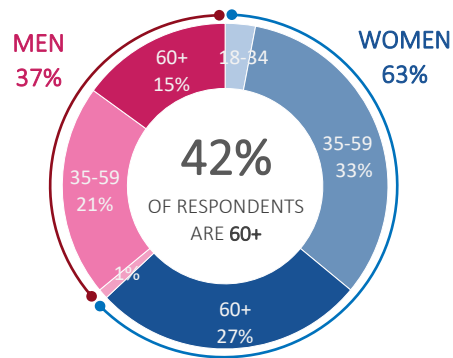
Hoptivka IBCP still lacks shelters and places for people to sit while waiting for buses for up to three hours.

UNHCR continued the installation of the shelters and prefabricated modules at Milove IBCP in November.



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Individuals surveyed by R2P in November at the IBCPs

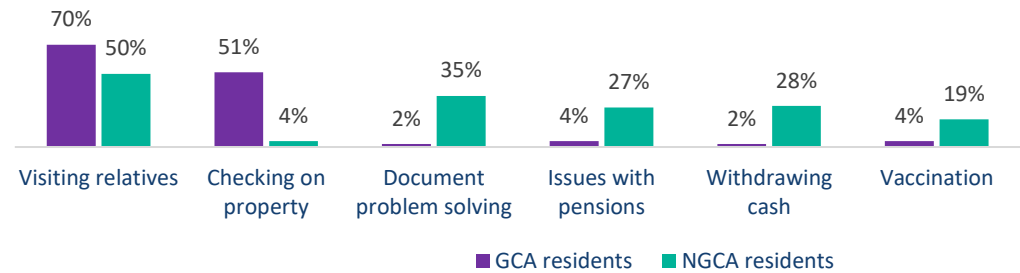


The distance, which persons were compelled to cover travelling between NGCA and GCA through IBCPs, fluctuated from 450 up to 1,300 km.

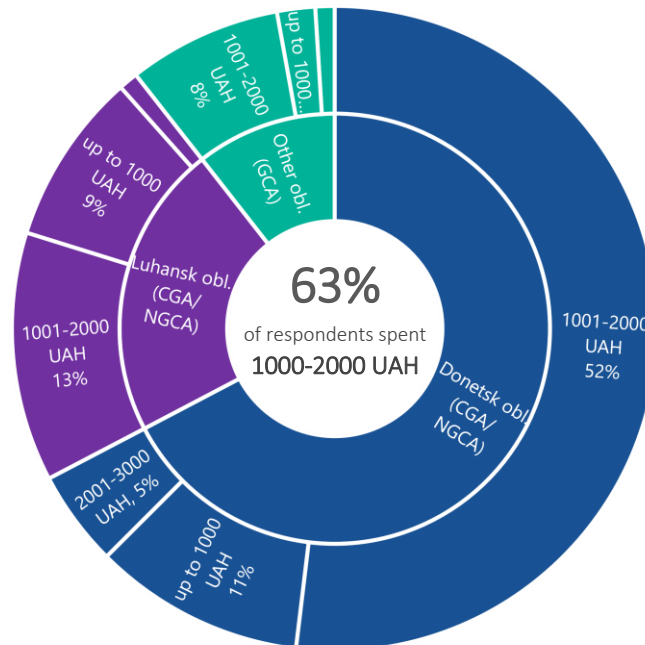


Those who crossed the border using services of private carriers spent 2,000 UAH on average to pay for the transport and changed up to 3 vehicles during the trip.

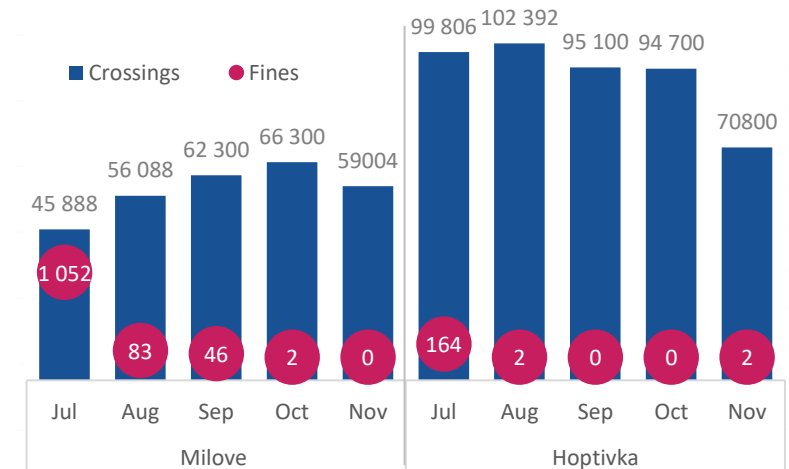
MOST FREQUENT REASONS FOR CROSSING IBCPs



COST OF SINGLE JOURNEY THROUGH IBCP*



Number of crossings, and people fined, at Milove and Hoptivka IBCPs (citizens of Ukraine only)**



*By oblast of residence, percentage calculated within the subgroup of respondents in pedestrian line

** Statistics on the number of crossings and fines were obtained from the State Border Guard Service