

CROSSING THE LINE OF CONTACT

MONITORING REPORT



April 2018

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INTRODUCTION

This report provides the results of the April 2018 round of the survey conducted by the Charitable Foundation «The Right to Protection» (R2P) at the five entry-exit checkpoints (EECPs) with the non-government-controlled area (NGCA) administered on a regular basis since June 2017. The EECPs are located in Donetsk (Maiorske, Marinka, Hnutove and Novotroitske) and Luhansk (Stanytsia Luhanska) Oblasts.

The survey is a part of the monitoring of violations of the human rights of the conflict-affected population within the framework of the project «Advocacy, Protection and Legal Assistance to the Internally Displaced Population of Ukraine» implemented by R2P with the support of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The purpose of the survey is to explore the reasons and concerns

of those travelling between the NGCA and the government controlled area (GCA), as well as the conditions and risks associated with crossing the line of contact through the EECPs. It should be noted that the survey results should not be directly extrapolated onto the entire population crossing the checkpoints, but it helps identify needs, gaps and trends, and provides an evidentiary basis for advocacy efforts.

The data collection methodology was the same at all EECPs. R2P monitors surveyed civilians queuing at the government-controlled side of EECPs in the lines for pedestrians and for vehicles both in the GCA and NGCA directions. The survey was conducted anonymously and on a voluntary basis. All persons interviewed for the survey were informed about its purpose.

This report is based on the data collected from 2 to 27 April 2018 during 38 visits to the five EECPs. This reporting period is characterized by warming weather and the beginning of the holiday season.

OVERALL SUMMARY



Maiorske EECP

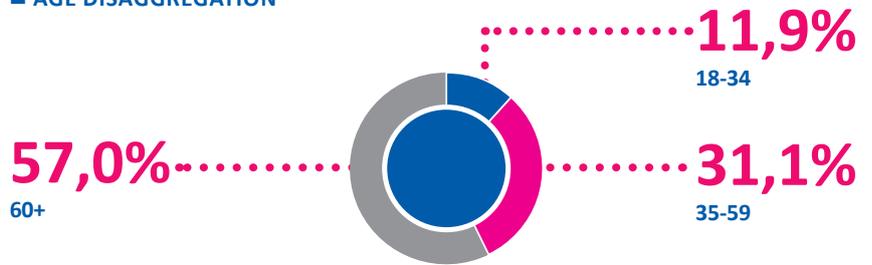
- The gender and age proportions of respondents have remained quite similar though all rounds of the survey. The elderly represent the largest age group, which is most likely related to the requirements of Ukrainian legislation for obtaining pensions and social benefits.
- Similar to the data collected in March, GCA residents had far fewer reasons to travel across the line of contact than NGCA residents who must solve issues related to state, legal and banking services, which are impossible or very difficult in the NGCA. The disaggregation of reasons for crossing remains relatively stable.
- The warm weather has had a positive impact on the level of concerns. The number of complaints about the condition of the pedestrian area decreased significantly. At the same time, more respondents were concerned about long lines, especially at Marinka, Hnutove and Novotroitske EECPs.

1 DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

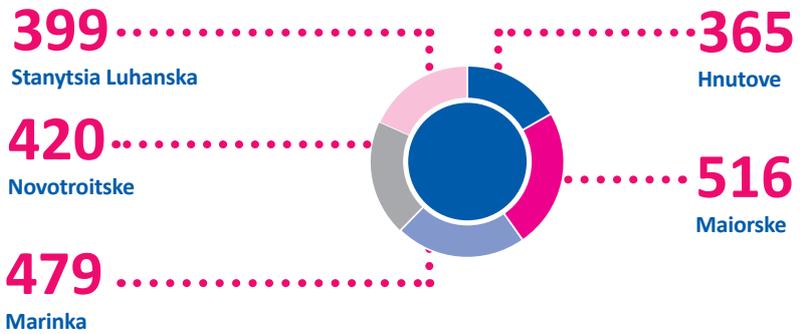
During the reporting period, R2P monitors surveyed a total of **2,179** persons crossing the line of contact. **45.8%** of them were travelling to the NGCA and **54.2%** to the GCA.

35.4% of respondents were male and **64.6%** were female. **5.6%** of respondents were travelling with children. Elderly people remain the most numerous age group (**57%**), which is related to the legislative requirements regarding receipt of pensions by persons registered in the NGCA. The overall disaggregation of respondents remained quite similar throughout all survey rounds.

AGE DISAGGREGATION



NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS BY EEC



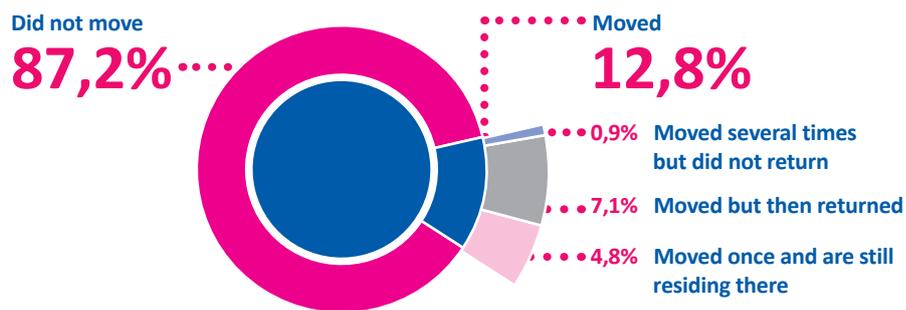
Marinka EEC

2 RESIDENCE, DISPLACEMENT AND RETURN

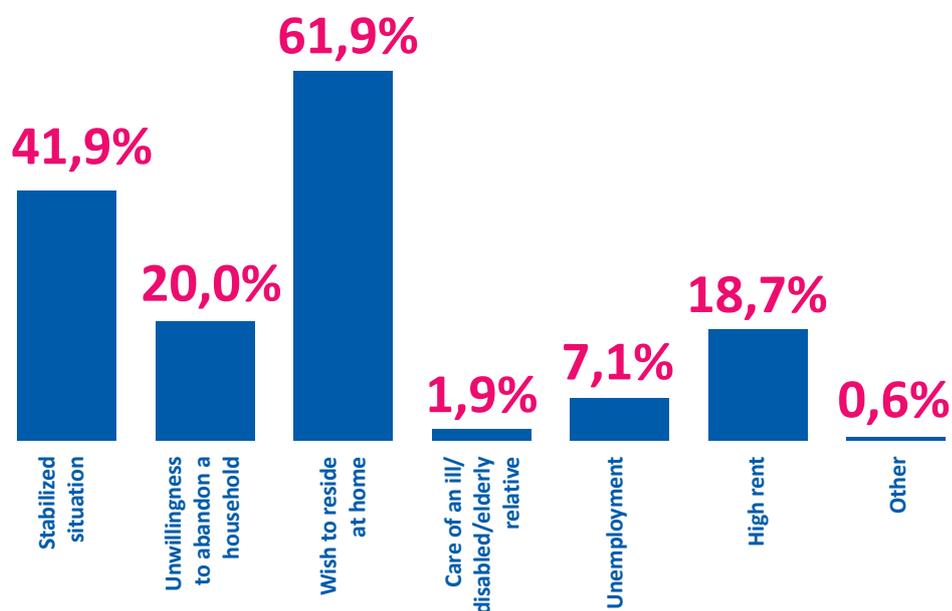
The NGCA was cited as the place of residence prior to the conflict by 94.8% of respondents. 90.0% of all respondents stated that they were permanently residing in the NGCA at the time of the survey. The tendency of GCA residents having far fewer reasons to travel across the line of contact than NGCA residents remained unchanged. 12.8% of respondents stated that they had changed their place of residence due to the conflict in Eastern Ukraine at least once. 7.1% of all respondents ultimately returned to their original place of residence¹.

Among the returnees, the majority (61.9%) explained their decision by the desire to reside at home. Another common reason for return (41.9%) was the stabilized security situation at their prior place of residence. Though there was a significant difference in numbers in comparison to March (wish to reside at home was mentioned by 22.4% more often while stabilized situation was mentioned by 13.1% less often), it does not show the dynamics of changes in reasons for return as data on the time of movement is unavailable.

DISPLACEMENT



REASONS FOR RETURN²



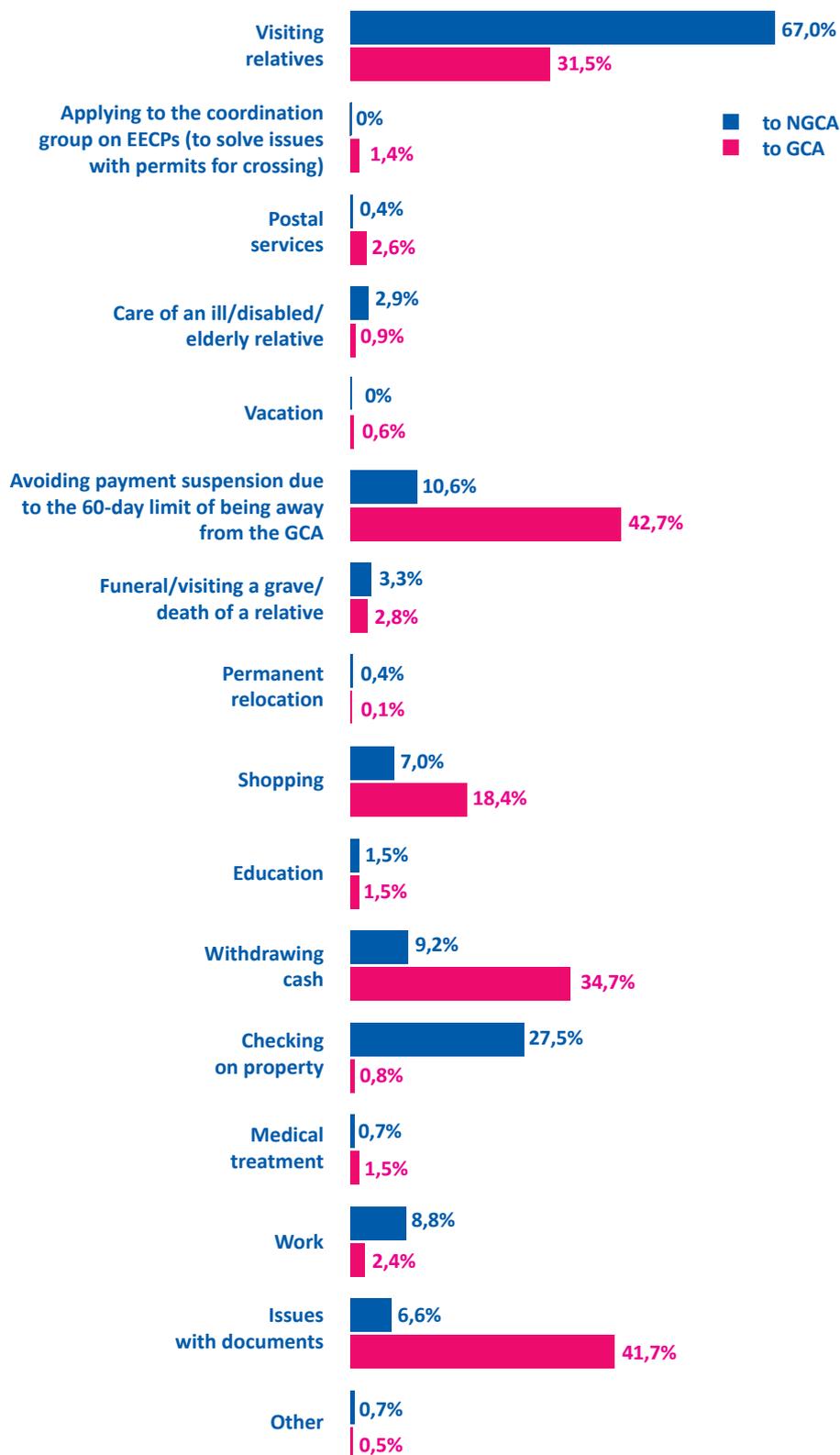
¹ It is important to mention that the disaggregation should not be extrapolated to the whole population as the survey does not cover internally displaced persons or NGCA residents who do not travel through the EECs.

² Respondents could mention several reasons.

3 REASONS AND FREQUENCY

The GCA was indicated as the destination of the trip by 87.5% of respondents. The reasons for crossing are substantially different depending on the destination area. The respondents were mostly traveling to the GCA to avoid payment suspension due to the 60-day limit of being away from the GCA, solve issues with documents and withdraw cash. The most common reasons to go to the NGCA were visiting relatives and checking on property³. It is noteworthy that the number of respondents who were travelling to the GCA in order to avoid the suspension of social benefits increased by 14.1% compared to March. However, the overall picture in reasons for crossing remains relatively stable. Among other reasons respondents mentioned for travelling was to sell dairy products and to submit documents for a permit to cross the line of contact.

■ REASONS FOR CROSSING BY DIRECTION⁴



³ Respondents could mention several reasons.

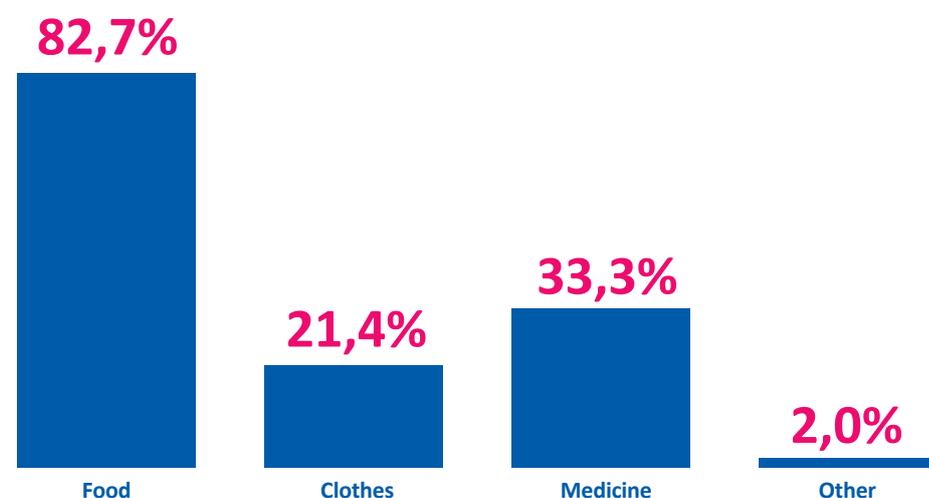
⁴ The percentage was calculated based on the total number of people who indicated either the GCA or the NGCA as their destination.

16.9% of all respondents indicated shopping as their reason for crossing the line of contact. 94.9% of such respondents were travelling to the GCA. The proportion remains relatively stable.

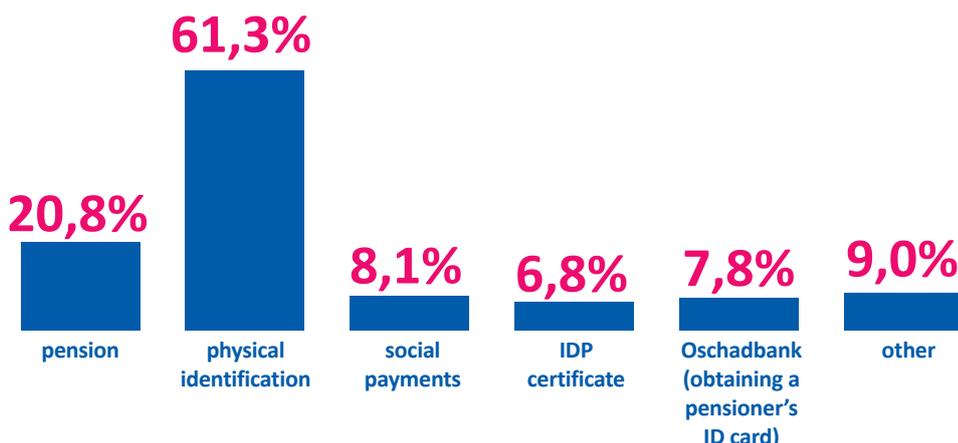
The need to pass physical identification remains the most common documentation issue.

The majority of respondents (69.5%) stated that they cross the line of contact quarterly. Taking into account the age disaggregation, such share of respondents travelling quarterly and monthly is most likely related to the requirements imposed on people with NGCA residence registration by Ukrainian legislation for obtaining pensions and social benefits, such as verification of the actual place of residence and physical identification at Oschadbank. The ratio remains stable in comparison with the previous reporting period.

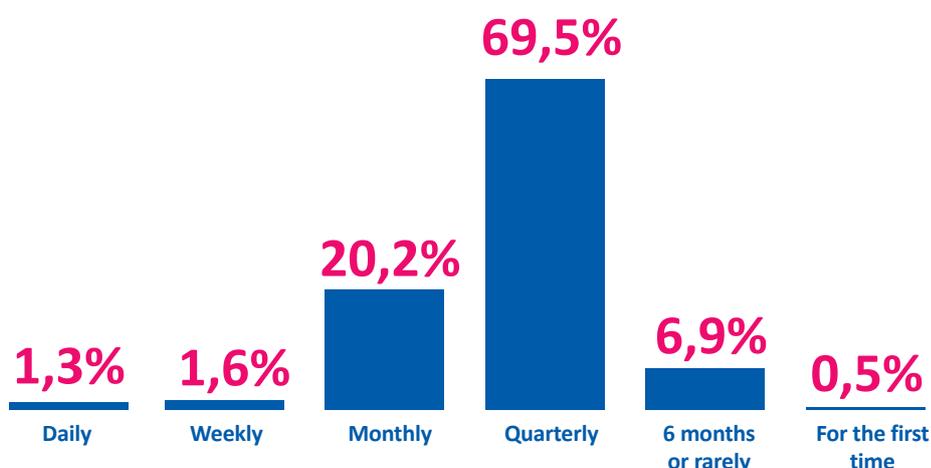
■ TYPE OF GOODS PURCHASED



■ TYPE OF DOCUMENT ISSUE



■ FREQUENCY OF CROSSING THE LINE OF CONTACT

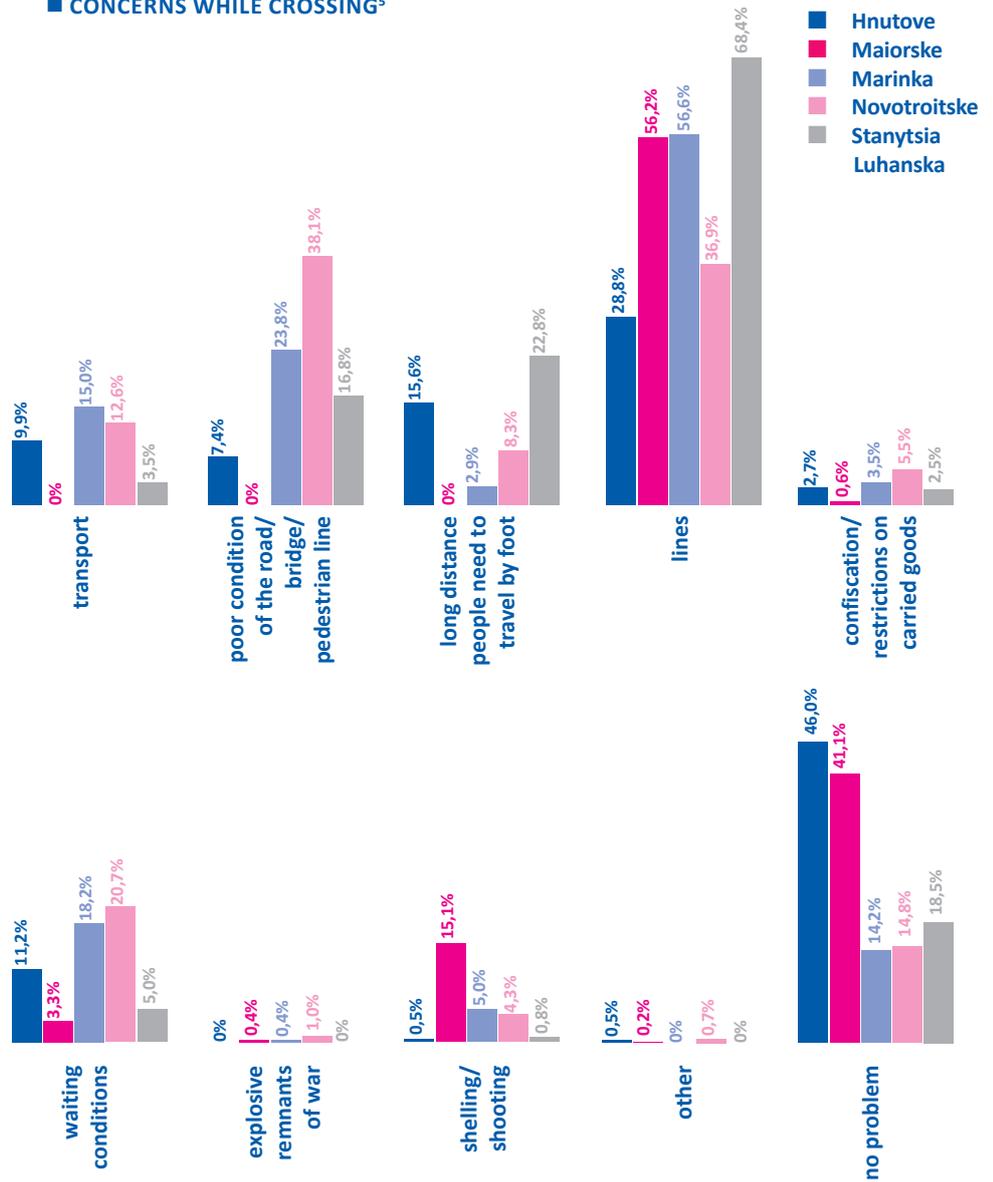


4 CONCERNS WHILE CROSSING THE LINE OF CONTACT

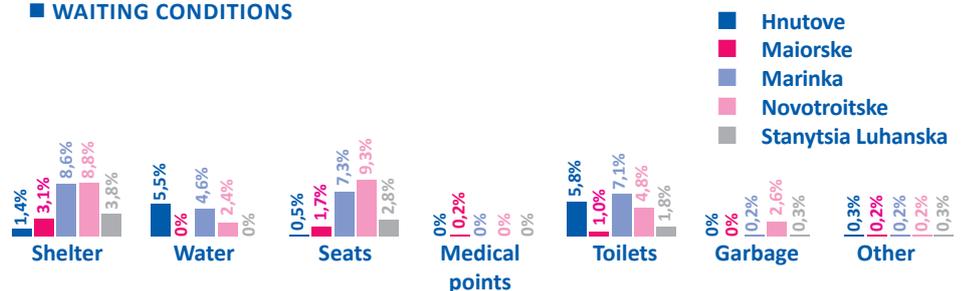
The warming weather has had a positive impact on the level of concerns about the poor condition of the roads, mainly at Hnutove, Marinka and Novotroitske EECs. In particular, at Hnutove EEC, the level of such concern decreased from 44.0% in March to 7.4% in April. Consequently, the overall level of concern has changed significantly at Hnutove EEC: 24.6% of all respondents at that EEC did not mention any concerns in March, while in April the share increased by 21.4%.

Long lines remain an issue of high concern at the checkpoints. It is important to mention that the level of such concern has increased significantly at Marinka (from 32.6% in March to 56.6% in April), Hnutove (from 9.7% to 28.8%) and Novotroitske (from 26.0% to 36.9%) EECs.

■ CONCERNS WHILE CROSSING⁵



■ WAITING CONDITIONS



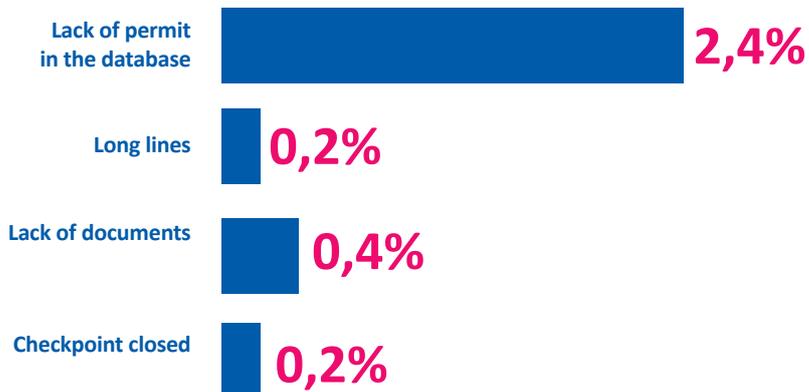
The lack of seats and shelter were the most common concerns among those who complained about waiting conditions. It is noteworthy, that respondents at Hnutove and Maiorske EEC had fewer complaints regarding the lack of shelter in comparison with the data collected in March.

⁵ Respondents could mention several concerns

5 INABILITY TO CROSS

Only 3.0% of all respondents mentioned incidents of not being able to cross the line of contact in the past six months. The permit being missing from the database was the most common reason for such incidents.

REASONS FOR INABILITY TO CROSS



Hnutove EECF

