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The UN Refugee Agency



# EECP SURVEY REPORT

Mid-year 2020

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# INTRODUCTION



## Eastern Ukraine Checkpoint Monitoring Report January – June 2020

This report provides the results of the survey conducted at all five Entry-Exit Checkpoints (EECPs) with the non-government-controlled area (NGCA) in the first half of 2020. Due to quarantine restrictions, the report contains survey data from 1 January to 17 March. The survey is a part of the monitoring of violations of 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 CF "Right to Protection" (R2P) in partnership with and with financial support of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)<sup>1</sup>. The objective of the survey is to explore the motivations and concerns of the civilians travelling between the non-government-controlled areas (NGCA) and the government-controlled areas (GCA), as well as the conditions and risks associated with crossing the contact line through the EECPs. More statistical data is available on the Eastern Ukraine Checkpoint Monitoring Online Dashboard – <https://www.unhcr.org/ua/en/eecp-monitoring-2020>.

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<sup>1</sup> The survey has been conducted regularly since June 2017.





This report is based on a survey of civilians crossing the contact line at the five EECs. It is noteworthy that the survey results should not be directly extrapolated to the entire population travelling through the checkpoints, but it helps to identify needs, gaps, and trends while providing an evidentiary basis for advocacy efforts. The data collection methodology was the same at all EECs and was collected from January to 17 March during regular visits to each of the five EECs on a weekly basis.

The survey was conducted anonymously and with the informed consent of the respondents. All persons interviewed for the survey were informed about its objective. The survey was conducted in the form of personal interviews with people aged 18 and above. R2P monitors surveyed pedestrians queuing at the EECs waiting to cross the contact line, the survey was not conducted in the vehicle queue or on weekends. R2P monitors approached every fourth person in line with a request to complete the survey. If a person refused to participate, R2P monitors proceeded to survey the next fourth person in line. People travelling both to and from GCA took part in the survey. At no time did R2P monitors cross the zero checkpoints into NGCA. The overall share of respondents travelling in both directions was almost even: 54% of interviews were conducted with people heading to NGCA, 46% of respondents were going to GCA.

# HIGHLIGHTS

- With the introduction of quarantine, since 17 to 22 March people could cross only in the direction of their residence registration – NGCA or GCA. On 22 March, EECPs suspended operations, and slightly over 14,000 persons have received permission to cross since then.
- On 9 June Ukraine announced the reopening of EECPs in Donetsk oblast on 10 June, after closing them for almost three months. Meanwhile, by the end of June, the other four EECPs remain closed with limited exceptions, since the de-facto authorities of NGCA side have banned the crossing of contact line on the NGCA side. However, since the beginning of quarantine there have been several so-called "corridors" at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP (Luhanska oblast) according to pre-agreed lists.
- Admission to higher education institutions for students from NGCA has been heavily affected by quarantine restrictions. Over 300 students have been allowed to cross the contact line while about one thousand have applied for passing an External Independent testing (EIT) since 16 June. The recently adopted law seeks to improve the situation: children from NGCA will be able to enroll in Ukrainian universities without passing EIT and have the opportunity to study in all universities.
- People who crossed to GCA faced numerous difficulties with installing the app "Act at Home" on their phone. In particular, people with older phones and/or Kyivstar sim-cards were troubled a lot with technical issues. Insufficient Wi-Fi at Novotroitske also complicated the issue. Besides, representatives of State Border Guard Service (SBGS) at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP required that people confirm their place of self-isolation and upload a reference photo directly at the EECP that led to geolocation issues later. People who could not install the app have been placed in an SES tent to resolve those issues the following day, or they have been sent for observation.
- In turn, people from Donetsk NGCA are supposed to have residence registration ("propiska") in GCA to be eligible to cross the checkpoint. Also, people are required to sign a document of non-return to the NGCA side until the end of the quarantine there. Additionally, people crossing to NGCA are to be sent for a 2-week observation without any alternative options of self-isolation regime.
- The implementation of coronavirus-related quarantine procedures caused a dramatic reduction in crossings. People in NGCA are unable to receive their pensions, social benefits, birth/death certificates, buy drugs, etc. Residents of GCA who left for any personal issues on the NGCA side before the introduction of the quarantine, also cannot return home. Family unity and access to the place of residence or place of treatment are also issues for a number of people.
- In the period 1 January to 17 March, 67,134 vulnerable elderly persons were provided with transport support at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP by Proliska's electric vehicle. As of 17 March, transportation services were suspended due to the quarantine measures. Most services suspended their work between 17-20 March at all EECPs: the Coordination Group representatives, INGO medical representatives, and transportation including a social bus at Stanytsia Luhanska. In June, e-vehicle services resumed, the total number of people transported in six months was 69,405.
- R2P monitors reported five fatalities that took place on the GCA side in the first half of 2020 and according to information from public sources one fatality on the NGCA side. The preliminary causes of death in most cases were related to heart problems.

# THE IMPACT OF QUARANTINE RESTRICTIONS ON THE WORK OF EECPS

## DONETSKA OBLAST

People could cross only in the direction of their residence registration ("propiska") – NGCA or GCA".

NGCA EECPs fully suspended passing of people.

GCA EECPs fully suspended passing of people.



The Headquarters of Joint Forces Operation (JFO) reported that from 10 June EECPs on GCA side would resume their work.

The NGCA side did not allow any crossings.

De-facto authorities of NGCA announced possible opening of EECPs on the NGCA side from 22 June.



Humanitarian corridor according to pre-agreed list at Novotroitske EECP (all subsequent humanitarian corridors were conducted at the same EECP).

Humanitarian corridor according to pre-agreed list.

Humanitarian corridor according to pre-agreed list.

GCA de-facto authorities announced full suspension of crossings in Donetsk oblast.

◀ 17 March ▶

◀ 21 March ▶

◀ 22 March ▶

1 April ▶

25 April ▶

16 May ▶

19 May ▶

30 May ▶

◀ 9 June ▶

◀ 10 June ▶

◀ 11 June ▶

13 June ▶

13 June ▶

15 June ▶

16 - 18 June

19 June ▶

◀ 22 - 24 June ▶

◀ 25 June ▶

◀ 26 June ▶

27 June ▶

◀ 28 June ▶

30 - 31 June

## LUHANSKA OBLAST

People could cross only in the direction of their residence registration ("propiska") – NGCA or GCA".

NGCA EECPs fully suspended passing of people.

GCA EECPs fully suspended passing of people.

Humanitarian corridor at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP (all subsequent humanitarian corridors were conducted at the same EECP).

Humanitarian corridor.

Humanitarian corridor.

Humanitarian corridor.

Humanitarian corridor.

The Headquarters of Joint Forces Operation (JFO) reported that from 10 June EECPs on GCA side would resume their work.

The NGCA side did not allow any crossings.

De-facto authorities of NGCA announced possible opening of EECPs on the NGCA side from 22 June.

Children with accompanying person are allowed to enter for passing the External Independent Testing without mandatory self-isolation at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP.

Humanitarian corridor according to pre-agreed list at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP.

Since then, NGCA de-facto authorities allowed crossing only according to the pre-approved lists. Those who were stuck at GCA checkpoint made list by themselves and physically transferred it to NGCA checkpoint. Afterwards, NGCA representatives informed people by phone about permission to cross.

Humanitarian corridor according to pre-agreed list.

The crossing procedure became less complicated. The crossing process from GCA to NGCA resumed as usual. Yet, only people with NGCA residence registration in Luhansk oblast were eligible to cross, others were required to obtain respective approval from NGCA de-facto authorities or any confirmation of their permanent residence in NGCA. The crossing process from GCA to NGCA resumed as usual.

Humanitarian corridor according to pre-agreed list.

Humanitarian corridor according to pre-agreed list. Besides, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (CMU) adopted the possibility not to undergo self-isolation for children entering to universities via educational centers Donbass – Ukraine.

Humanitarian corridor according to pre-agreed list.

Humanitarian corridor according to pre-agreed list.

Humanitarian corridor according to pre-agreed list.

**i** During the quarantine period, were isolated cases of crossing at Hnutove, Maiorske and Marinka EECPs.



On 12 March, the Government of Ukraine introduced a quarantine and approved a package of anti-epidemic measures to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The introduction of quarantine vastly hindered the mobility of the thousands of IDPs and other citizens who have residence registration on one side of the contact line, but actually live on the other side. It also affected those who could not return in time to the other side of contact line. The closure of EECPs deprived thousands of people of essential needs such as receiving social benefits, pensions, and birth/death certificates, as well as visiting family members or even accessing their own property. Some people were even cut off from their place of permanent residence.

People experienced severe hardships associated with crossing the checkpoint during the quarantine. Specifically, they might have been exposed to various hazards of that include shelling or mine explosions by being stuck at “zero” checkpoint. Some people did not have sufficient financial means to pay for accommodation when stuck at the checkpoint, and were compelled to find shelter wherever they could: (at bus stations, in cars, SES tents) or to spend the night in the open air. Moreover, they often were not properly provided with food, medicine, or basic hygiene facilities etc. Above all, they faced (and still face) uncertainty with regard to the crossing procedure due, in part, to lack of coordination on both sides of the contact line, and face constantly changing circumstances. In cases where people have managed to cross the contact line from the NGCA side to GCA, they are required to sign a document stating the intention of non-returning to the NGCA side until the end of the quarantine period.

## March

- On 15 March, the JFO Headquarters announced a few hours before the closing of the EECPs that the crossing of the contact line, from then on, would be allowed only in the direction of a person’s residence registration (“propiska”) whether in NGCA or GCA, or if a person had an urgent issue (family reunion, critical medical condition, etc.). From 22 March, EECPs fully suspended the passage of people, with a very limited number of specific exceptions, while de-facto authorities did it a day earlier. As a result, by the end of month people had been stranded during the days at all of the EECPs, often without having the financial means for temporary accommodation. The most urgent situation occurred at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP. People who did not manage to cross the contact line before it was closed, were stranded for days on the GCA side, and were unable to cross the contact line.

## April

- EECPs continued to operate in a restricted mode. To cross checkpoint people needed to have special permission from both sides. Albeit, even after getting approval to cross the contact line from one side, the other side may not allow the crossing. Thus, people submitted requests and waited for a decision. Over 200 attempts to cross the contact line have been revealed during April. Although, some people had humanitarian reasons, almost all of them were rejected to cross.

## May

- Over 160 people crossed the contact line in both directions during May. Most of these crossings (156) took place at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP, and were according to a list pre-agreed by NGCA. There were concerns about the lack of transparency for the establishment of this list, since this procedure had not been clarified. According to open source information, there were over 700 people on this list by mid-May. The list focused primarily on families whose members needed urgent treatment. The inability to cross through EECPs made people think of illegal ways of the crossing. A 35-year-old female resident of Avdiivka was killed by a mine near Dokuchaevsk when attempting to cross the contact line while by passing official regulations.

## June

- On 9 June, the Headquarters of the Joint Forces Operation reported that from 10 June, EECPs would operate again. Nevertheless, the problem of freedom of movement across the contact line remained unresolved: after several unsuccessful attempts of people to cross the contact line at Marinka and Novotroitske EECPs, it became clear that the NGCA side does not allow any one to cross. On 11 June, the NGCA announced that EECPs would operate again from 22 June. People who came to the EECPs, expecting that the EECPs would resume their work on 10 June, found themselves in a stalemate: in many cases, people stayed at EECPs, waiting for EECPs on the NGCA side to resume operations. On 22 June, crossings took place from both sides at Novotroitske EECP. NGCA suspended crossings from 28 June, without indicating when regular movement might resume.
- On 10 June at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP, SBGS servicemen allowed the first six people to cross at the EECP on the GCA side. However, they were blocked on the NGCA side. But, as in the previous month, people were later allowed to cross according to a pre-agreed list on 13-15 June. From 16 June, the de facto authorities of the NGCA allowed entry to the NGCA only after the preliminary approval of a list of persons. This list was to consist of people who were awaiting permission to cross from the GCA side, and then had to be passed physically to the NGCA checkpoint. NGCA representatives then informed people by phone about whether they had received permission to cross.
- At Novotroitske EECP, over 40 people were stuck at "zero" checkpoint due to the technical issues affecting the installation of the "Act at home" app on phones. There were a range of issues with installing the app: (1) Weak (or total lack of) Wi-Fi and /or mobile connection (mostly Kyivstar simcards); (2) some people have push-button phones or older smartphones (mostly Lenovo) that could not support the app; (3) an error in app activation when SBGS representatives asked people to confirm the place of self-isolation and upload a reference photo directly at the EECP. Ultimately, the app faced issues with geolocation and people could not confirm the actual place of self-isolation when they arrived there, as geolocation did not work properly with the app. This final issue was solved by the end of June after R2P's intervention. Eventually, the rest of the people who could not install the app were placed in the SES tent to resolve those issues the following day, or they were sent to observation.



From June:

- In order to cross from or to the NGCA side, one needs to be placed on a list which entails a complex procedure for submitting documents, as well as to write an application to the NGCA Emergency headquarters for fighting the spread of COVID-19 via an email or Telegram.
- There are several issues with the crossing procedure at the NGCA side for people who pass through the checkpoint from NGCA to GCA. In particular, people are supposed to have a residence registration ("propiska") in GCA to be eligible to cross the checkpoint. In addition, people are required to sign a document of non-return to the NGCA side until the end of the quarantine there (according to people who managed to cross through Novotroitske EECF to GCA).
- Hence, some people from NGCA refrain from using essential services on GCA side since they were afraid to get stuck without the possibility to return home. Besides, residents of the NGCA, upon crossing the checkpoint, will face with two weeks of observation without any alternative options as part of the self-isolation regime.

The implementation of coronavirus-related quarantine procedures caused a dramatic reduction of crossings. People in NGCA are unable to receive their pensions, social benefits, birth/death certificates, buy drugs etc. Residents of GCA who left for any personal issues on the NGCA side before the introduction of the quarantine, have also been unable to return home. Family unity as well as access to place of residence or treatment have also proven an issue for a number of people.

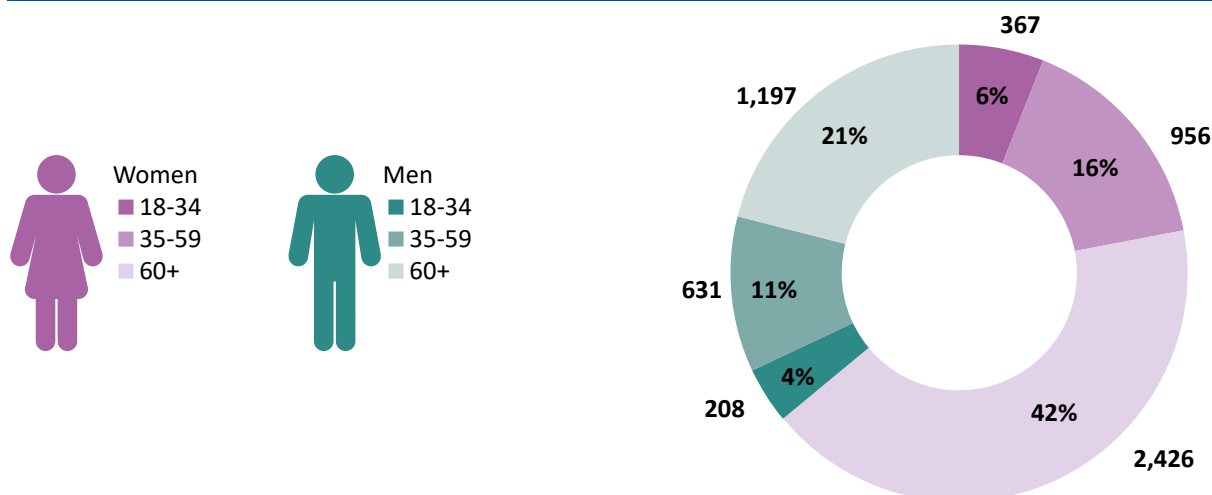


People crossing in the context of a humanitarian corridor during the quarantine at Novotroitske EECF

# DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

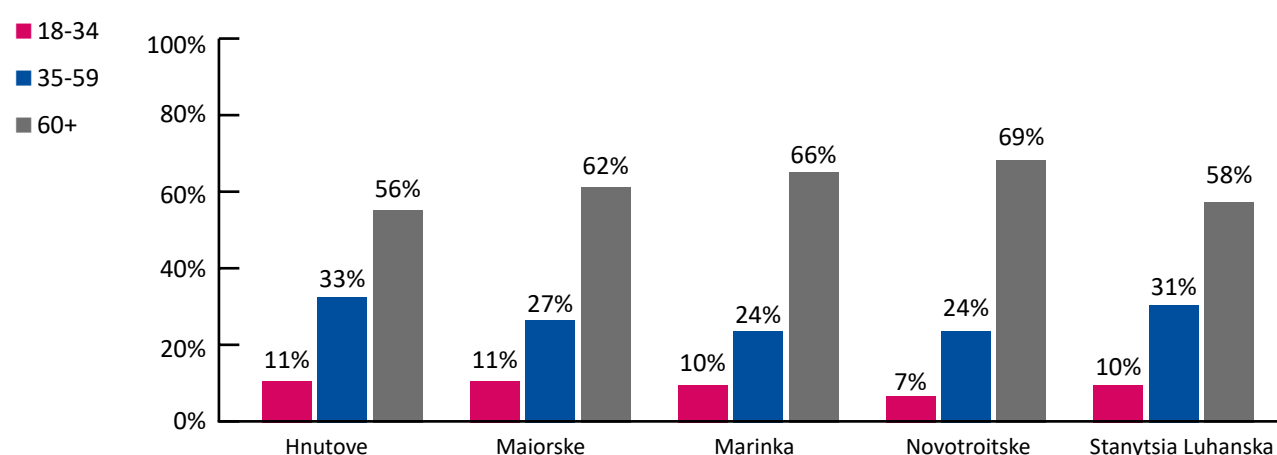
For the period from January to 17 March 2020, R2P monitors surveyed **5,785** individuals. Blocked crossings resulted in a drastic drop in the number of crossings. According to the SBGS statistics<sup>2</sup>, there were 6,589,000 crossings in the first quarter of 2019, while fewer than 2,642,000 crossings took place from 1 January to 22 March 2020 (from 17 to 22 March people could cross only in the direction of their residence registration – NGCA or GCA). Since quarantine restrictions, only about more than 14,000 people have crossed the contact line as of the end of June.

## AGE AND GENDER OF RESPONDENTS



The majority (64%) of respondents were women. 63% of all respondents were over 60 years old. Women over 60 years old constituted 42% of all respondents (2,426 individuals). 5% of all respondents were travelling with children.

## AGE OF RESPONDENTS BY EEC



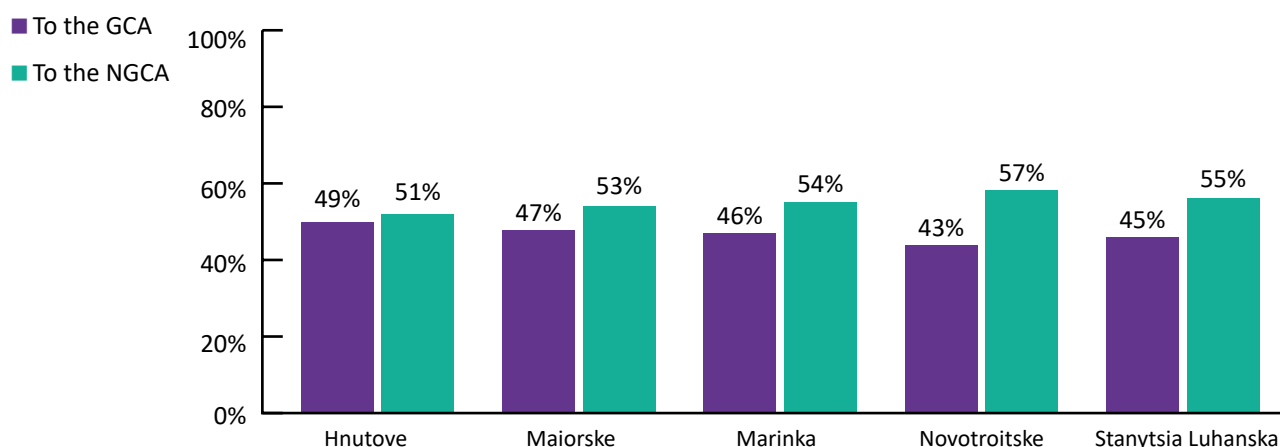
<sup>2</sup> General statistics on crossings are available at the UNHCR dashboard visualizing data from the State Border Guard Service – <https://goo.gl/TZbU8c>

The gender ratio was consistent each month, fluctuating within a range of 2 p.p. The age disaggregation also remains approximately the same, fluctuating within a range of 3 p.p. with older people representing the majority of interviewees.

To a certain extent, the age bias is caused by the survey being conducted among the pedestrians only, while according to observations, people of younger age and people with children often travel by car. Younger people might also be more likely to travel on weekends rather than on weekdays when they study or work.

Even though the demographic profile was similar at all EECs, the share of respondents who were of older age was higher at Novotroitske and Marinka EECs (69% and 66% respectively). This difference might be explained by the closer proximity of these EECs with larger cities in Donetsk Oblast NGCA and, consequently, lower transportation expenses. At the same time, Hnutove and Maiorske EECs are closer to the larger cities of Donetsk Oblast GCA (such as Mariupol, Konstantynivka, Bakhmut, etc.) with more services available for people of younger age, such as: to solve issues with documents in Administrative service centre, educational centres or some cultural events. The low number of younger respondents demonstrates that they have fewer reasons to cross the contact line. The overall share of respondents was almost even between both directions of crossings: 54% of interviews were conducted with people heading to the NGCA, 46% of respondents were going to the GCA. According to the monitoring observations, NGCA residents tend to make short trips (one, or only a few days) to solve their issues and then return. Payments and other cash-related issues were the main reasons for crossing among NGCA residents.

#### ► DIRECTION OF CROSSING BY EEC



Percentages calculated among respondents interviewed by R2P.

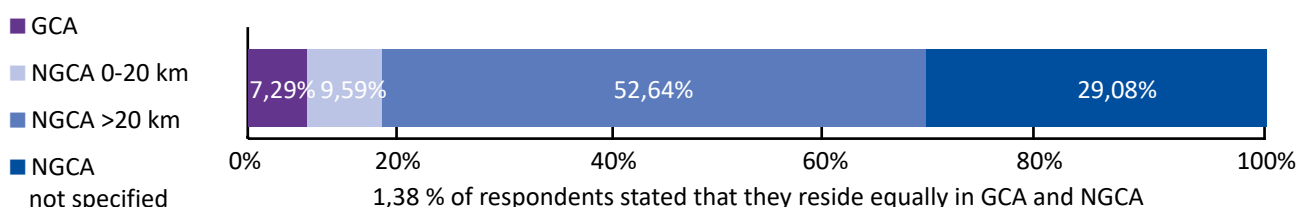


# RESIDENCE, DISPLACEMENT, AND RETURN

## RESIDENCE

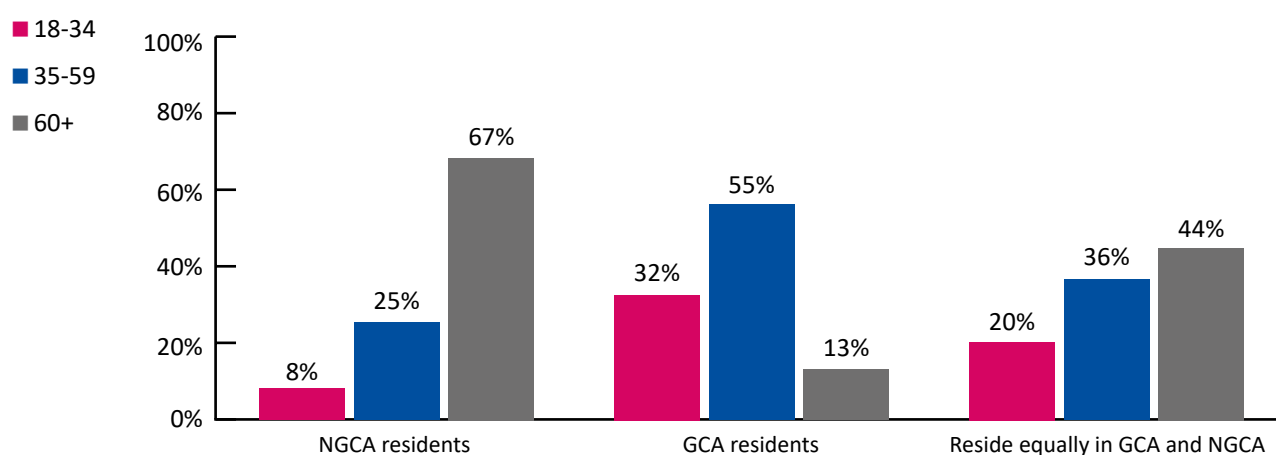
The majority of all respondents (91,38%) resided in the NGCA at the time of the survey. The share of younger respondents is higher among GCA residents: 32% of those in the age group 18-34 and 55% of those aged 35-59 in comparison to 13% of respondents who were over 60 years old.

### ► CURRENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE



Most of the NGCA residents stated that they live more than 20 kilometres from the contact line. Reasons for crossing did not significantly vary with the place of residents of respondents. The share of respondents who reside within the 20 kilometres distance from the contact line is the lowest among those surveyed at Hnutove (1%) and Marinka (9%) EECs. It is also important to remember that the GCA residents have fewer reasons to visit the NGCA, while people who reside in the NGCA often need services that are unavailable or limited in the NGCA. According to the SBGS data of crossings, the flow of people crossing the contact line was lower on days when governmental entities and banks were closed (weekends, holidays, etc.).

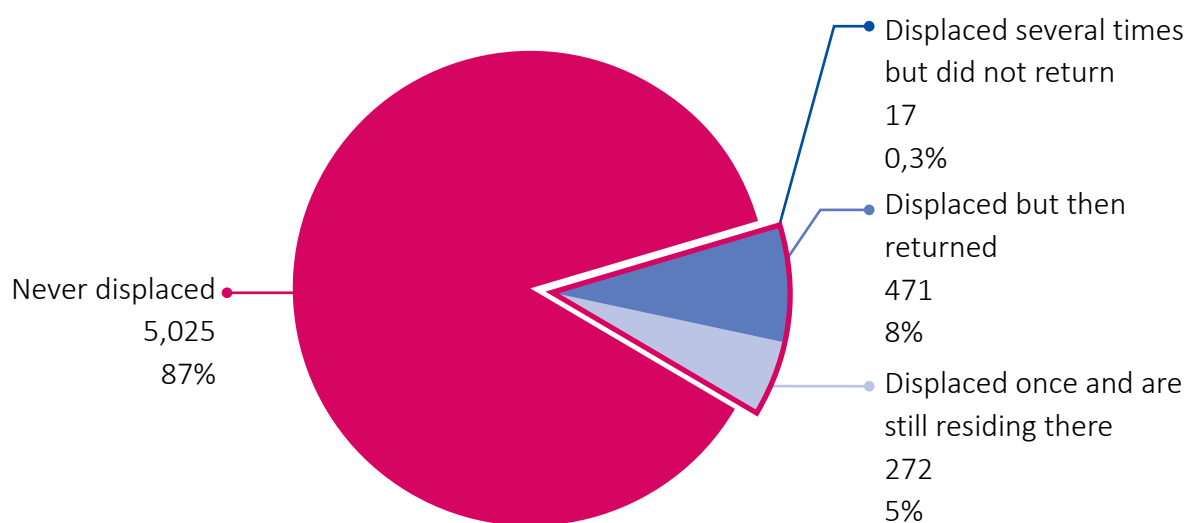
### ► AGE OF RESPONDENTS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE



## DISPLACEMENT & RETURN

87% of interviewees (without significant difference in age and gender) indicated that they had never moved as a result of the conflict, confirming the assumption that the number of IDPs and returnees is low among people who cross the contact line. The highest share (18%) of respondents who were displaced at least once was at Novotroitske EECP while the lowest share was at Stanytsia Luhanska (9%). At the same time, 81% of respondents at this EECP who had been displaced, then returned to their previous place of residence.

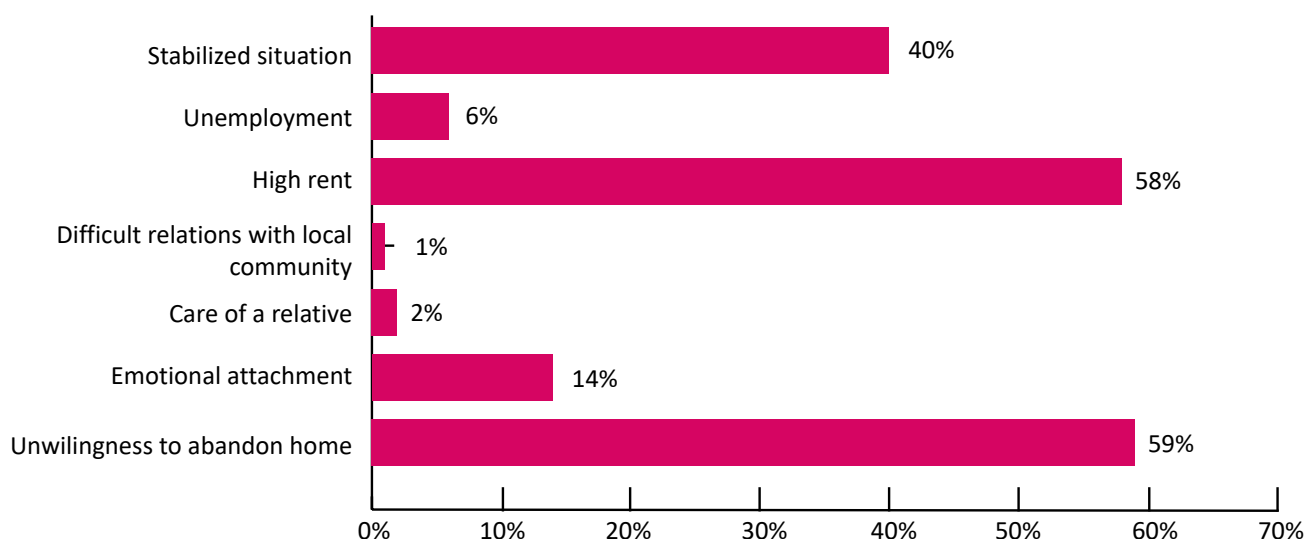
### ► DISPLACEMENT



47 % of the respondents who were displaced and returned to their previous place of residence claimed that their decision for return was both voluntary and due to the pressure of circumstances. 35% stated that their decision was voluntary. 16% of the respondents claimed they returned solely due to pressure of their circumstances. The most common reasons for return were unwillingness to abandon home (61%) and the high cost of rent (59%) as well as a stabilized situation (42%). It is noteworthy that the share of those who have been displaced at least once was higher (65%) among the respondents who reside further than 20 kilometres from the contact line than among those who live closer (16%). This may be explained by the fact that most large cities, generally located further away from the contact line, offer more opportunities of relocation for IDPs.

The most common reasons to cross among GCA respondents aged 18-34 and 35-59 were: to visit relatives (97 respondents – 72% and 167 respondents – 72% respectively) and to check on property (41 respondents – 30% and 84 respondents – 36% respectively). 58% – (245) of the respondents who reside in GCA have been displaced due to the conflict at least once. Most of them (218 persons – 89%) were displaced only once and still reside in areas of displacement. At the same time, 42% of current GCA residents travelling across the contact line have never been displaced. The vast majority of such respondents (76%) were visiting their relatives.

## ► REASONS FOR RETURN AMONG RESPONDENTS WHO WERE DISPLACED AS A RESULT OF THE CONFLICT AND WENT BACK TO THEIR HOMES



Older respondents were also more likely to return to the previous place of residence (90% compared to 27% of those aged 18-34 and 46% of those aged 35-59). No difference between men and women was observed.

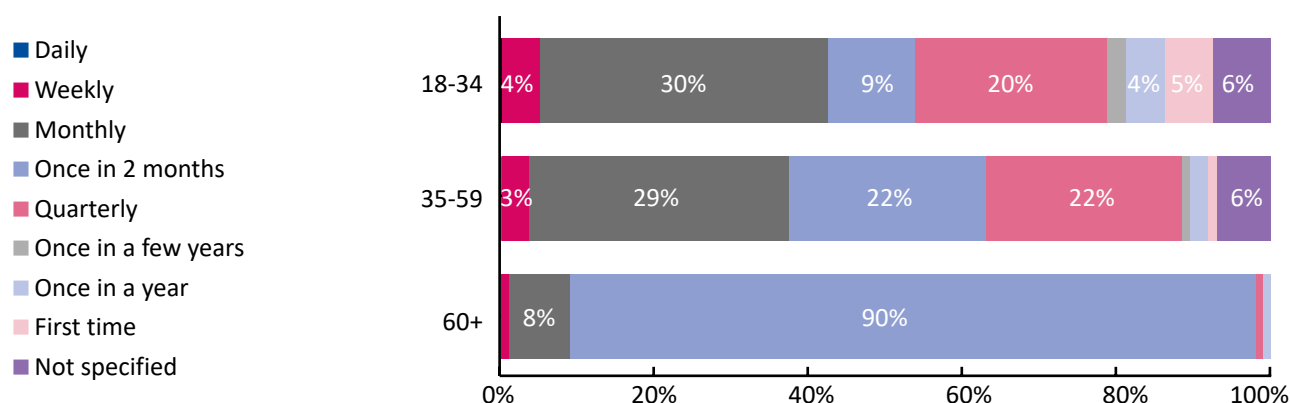
Although the majority of respondents who were displaced at least once already returned to their previous place of residence, this proportion should not be extrapolated to internally displaced persons or NGCA residents who do not travel across the contact line at all or who do not do so through official EECs. Also, there is no information regarding localities to which respondents were displaced.



# FREQUENCY AND DURATION OF CROSSING

In the first quarter of 2020, the vast majority of respondents (63%) crossed the contact line once every two months. This is especially relevant to pensioners (90% of older people travelled bimonthly), who need to be within the GCA at least once every 60 days to ensure the payment of their pension. Younger respondents plan their trips based on their own schedules and are not tied to any particular imposed frequency.

## ► FREQUENCY OF CROSSING THE LINE OF CONTACT BY AGE



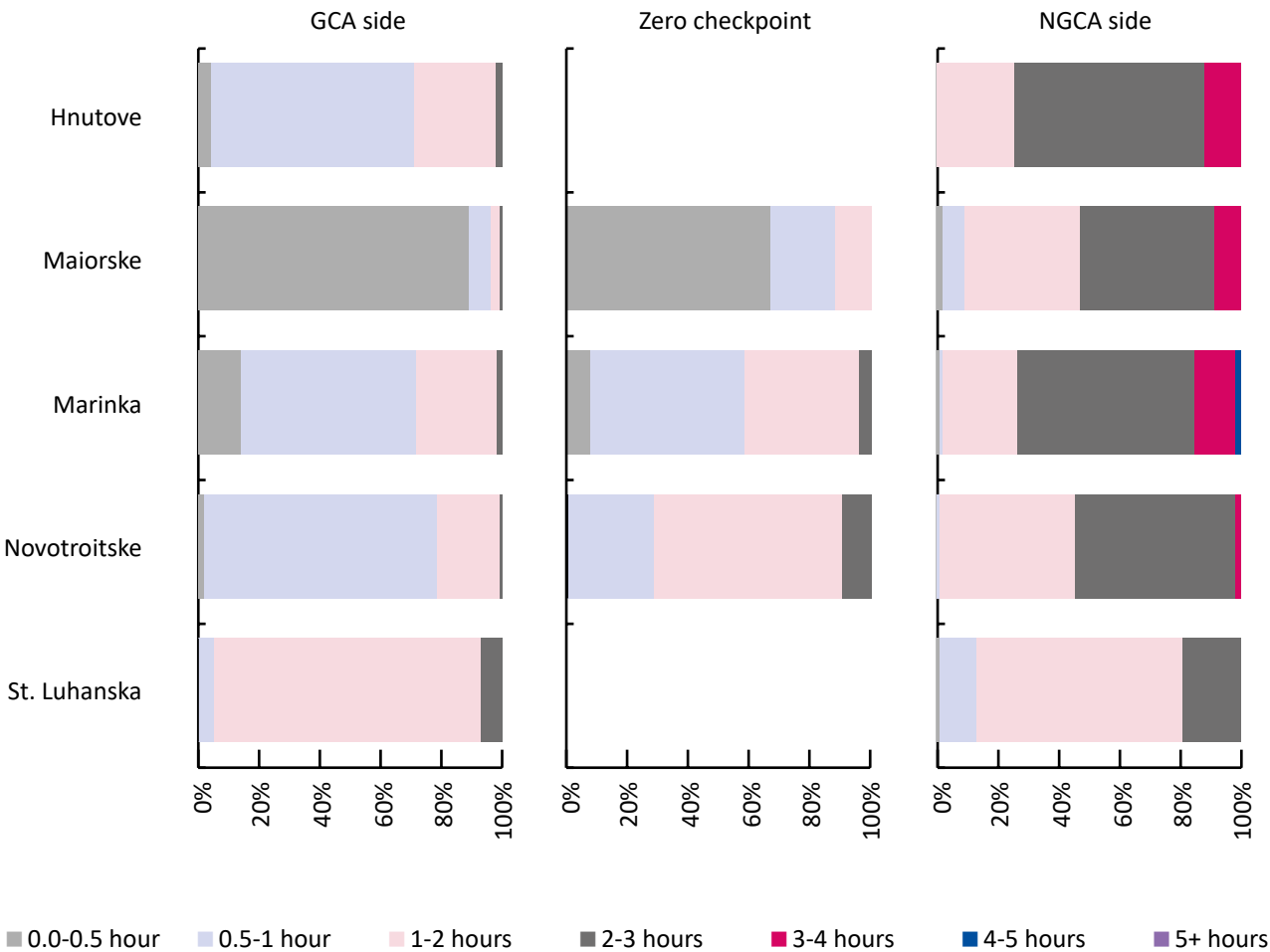
The frequency of crossing varied depending on the EECP. Thus, the share of respondents who crossed the contact line on a monthly basis was higher at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP (45%). The most common reasons for crossing among these respondents was to visit relatives (37%), to solve issues with documentation (26%) and issues related to pensions or social payments (25%).

As people were surveyed while they were in the process of crossing the contact line, the questions relating to duration referred to the previous crossing. 51% of all respondents stated that they had previously crossed the contact line in the first three months of 2020. There was no significant difference in the duration of crossing based on the age or gender of the respondents at all EECPs. Most respondents who answered the question about their previous crossing experience stated that it took longer to pass checkpoints in NGCA compared to their current crossing.

The duration of crossing significantly varied between EECPs and on which side of them the respondent found themselves. Thus, the longest duration of crossing (3-4 hours) was most frequently mentioned at Marinka and Hnutove EECPs on the NGCA side. The shortest waiting time (less than half an hour) was mostly mentioned at Maiorske EECP on the GCA side. This may be due to the fact that representatives of the Coordination group are present at Maiorske EECP, and if any questions arise, they can be quickly resolved by contacting them directly. The availability of fast and high-quality Internet at Maiorske EECP also affected the speed of crossing, accelerating the application procedure, while the Internet connection quality remained a problem for the rest of the EECPs. Also, R2P monitors noted improved logistics at this EECP after its reconstruction.

The vast majority of respondents mentioned it took them 2-3 hours to cross EECF on the NGCA side, and 1-2 hours – the GCA side.

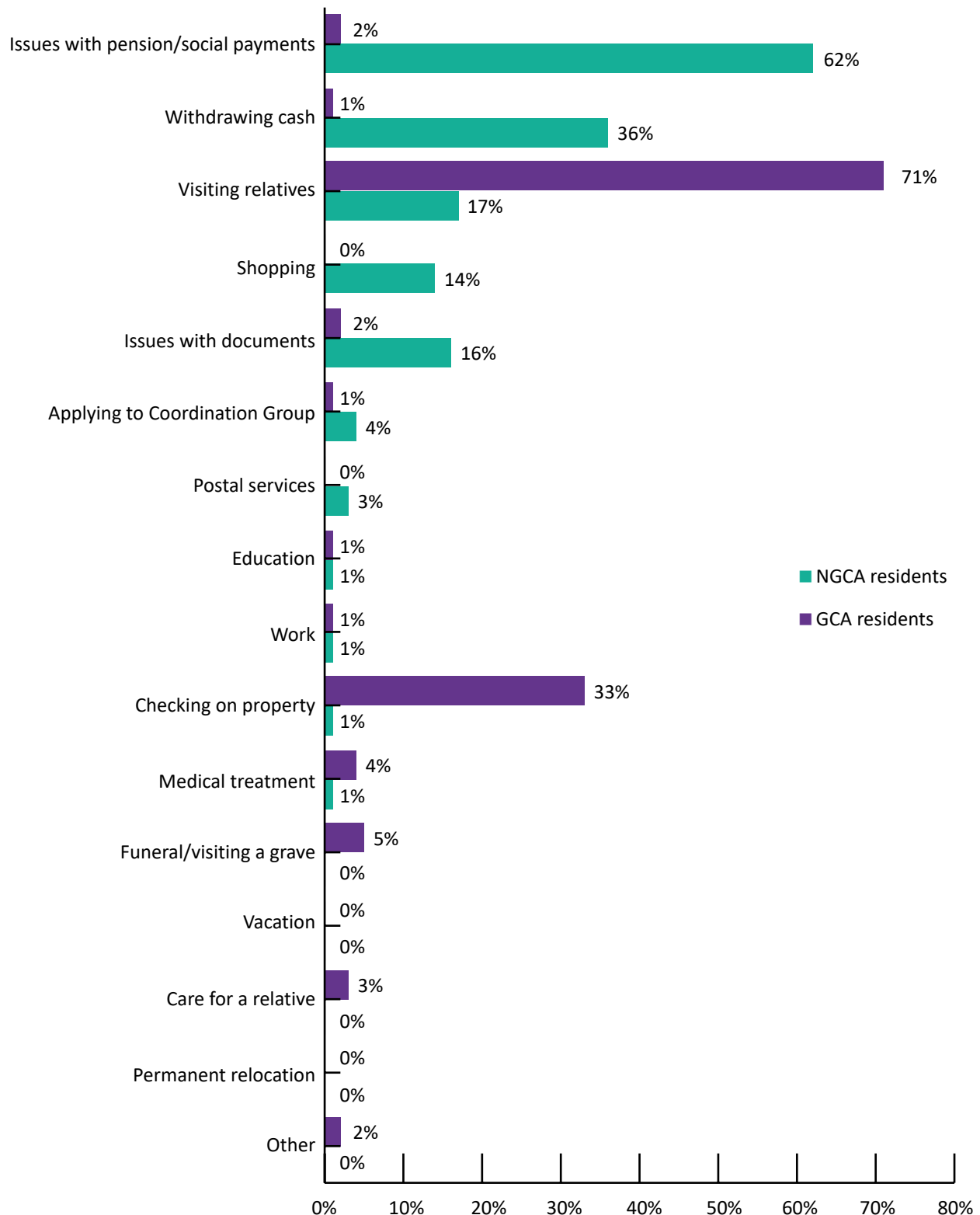
#### ► DURATION OF CROSSINGS



# REASONS FOR CROSSING

Reasons for crossings indicated by respondents remained the same from one month to the next during the reporting period. They also remain very similar to reasons indicated by respondents in 2018 and 2019. As in previous years, the reasons differed notably between GCA and NGCA residents.

## ► REASONS FOR CROSSING (BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE)



Percentages are calculated inside each group (GCA/NGCA). Respondents could indicate several reasons for crossing.



Solving issues with pensions or social payments was the most common reason for NGCA residents. It was also a lot more common among elderly people: 83% of respondents over 60 years age mentioned it as a reason for crossing compared to only 4% of the respondents aged 18-24. These issues include avoiding payment suspension due to the 60-day limit of not being in GCA (57% of all respondents); passing physical identification (46%); obtaining or reinstating of pensions (5%), etc. Younger respondents were more likely to travel to visit their relatives (41% in comparison to 12% of elderly respondents) and solve issues with documents (41% compared to 2% of elderly residents).

The reasons were also somewhat different depending on the EECp. Fewer people were travelling due to issues related to pensions and social payments through Maiorske (48%) and Stanytsia Luhanska (48%) than through Novotroitske (71%), Hnutove (59%) and Marinka (59%). At the same time, respondents at Stanytsia Luhanska (33%) and Hnutove (22%) EECps were more likely to visit their relatives. Respondents at Hnutove indicated they were solving issues with documents (20%) a little more often than at other EECps. This trend is most likely related to the proximity of this EECp to Mariupol, one of the bigger cities with more developed infrastructure and various services in different spheres, including governmental entities. It also correlates with a higher share of younger respondents as they are more likely to need to solve issues related to passports, birth certificates, etc.

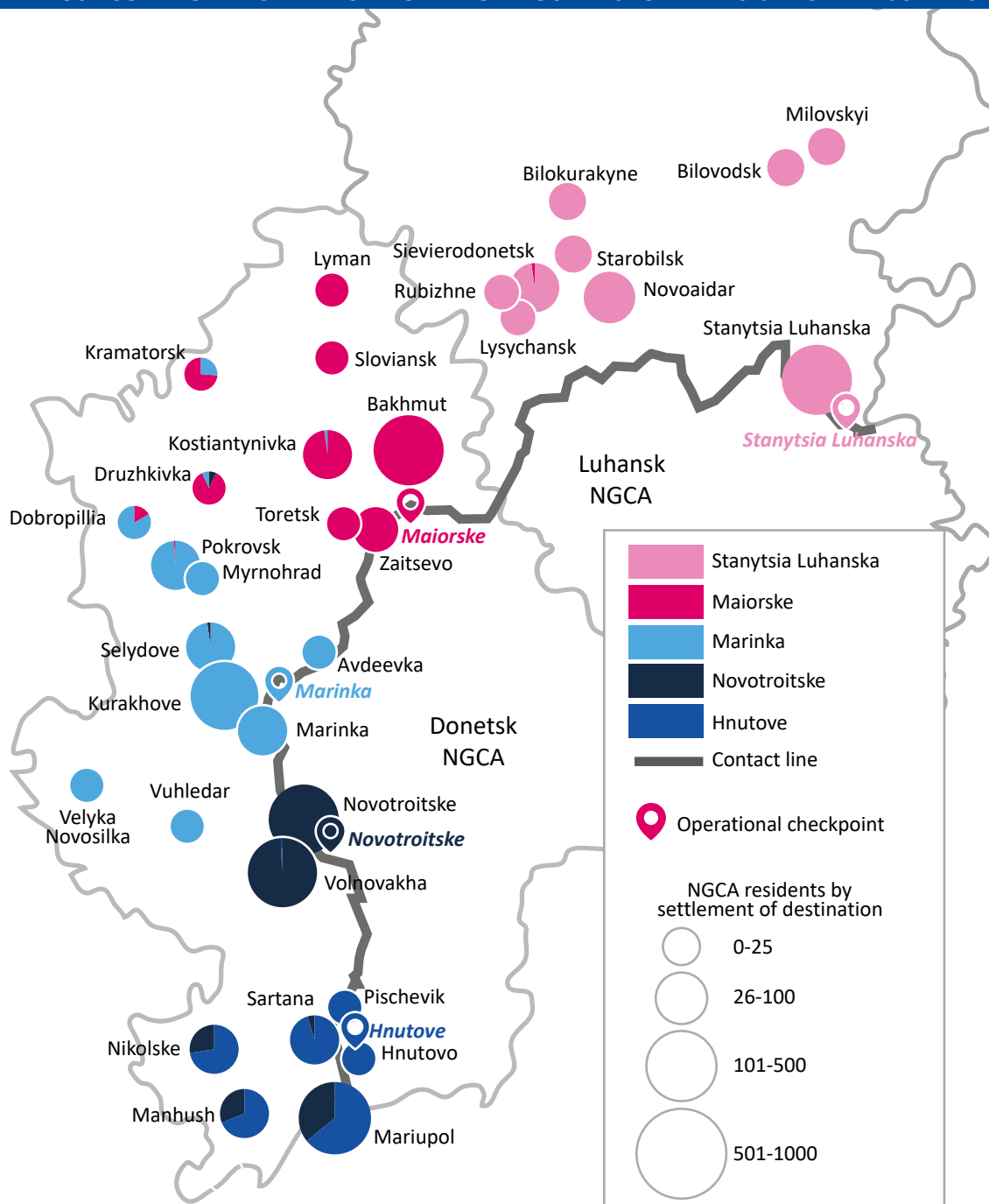
Out of all people who had issues with documents, 80% indicated issues related to passport. Among other documents respondents mentioned digitalized pension cards (62 individuals – 7%), obtaining death (125 individuals – 15%), birth (41 – 5%) and IDP certificates (46 – 6%).

13% of all respondents (744 individuals) indicated shopping as one of their reasons for crossing. 99% of them were NGCA residents. The most common purchases included food (74% of respondents) and medicines (49%), others were hygiene items (18%), clothes (6%), etc. There was no significant difference by gender in terms of what goods respondents were buying. At the same time, there was some difference between age groups: respondents aged 35-59 and over 60 years old were buying food more often than younger respondents (72% and 76% compared to 49%).

## DESTINATION OF THE TRIP

As the NGCA residents often travel to solve issues related to state, legal or bank services, it is important to identify localities where respondents go to find these services. Besides, it helps to understand the demand of the infrastructure of the localities in the GCA. 36% of all NGCA residents (1,914 individuals) agreed to answer the question about their destination point. The majority of these respondents (97%) were visiting localities in Donetsk and Luhansk Oblast. Mostly those located closer to the EECPs. 1% (19 individuals) were heading to Zaporizhzhia Oblast, 0,5% (9 individuals) – to Dnipro Oblast. It is important to note that destination points of some respondents were EECPs themselves to obtain services available there. It is also possible that some respondents named random localities if they did not feel secure enough to share such information.

### ► THE MOST COMMON DESTINATION POINT FOR NGCA RESPONDENTS JANUARY – JUNE 2020



2% (33) of respondents who answered this question traveled to other localities

# CONCERNS WHILE CROSSING THE CONTACT LINE

In comparison with the first half of 2019, the share of respondents who had no concerns related to crossing increased by 15% in 2020 (36% and 51% respectively).

Long lines remained a major concern at all EECs throughout the whole survey period. However, the share of respondents who mentioned this issue as their concern was different at each EEC, influenced by a multitude of factors such as the number of crossings at the particular EEC, technical issues, number of operating staff, etc.

There was no significant difference in concerns between gender. However, they varied depending between age groups of respondents. Overall, there were slightly fewer elderly people who were not concerned about the crossing procedure (47%) than among respondents aged 18-34 and 35-59 (60% and 57% respectively).

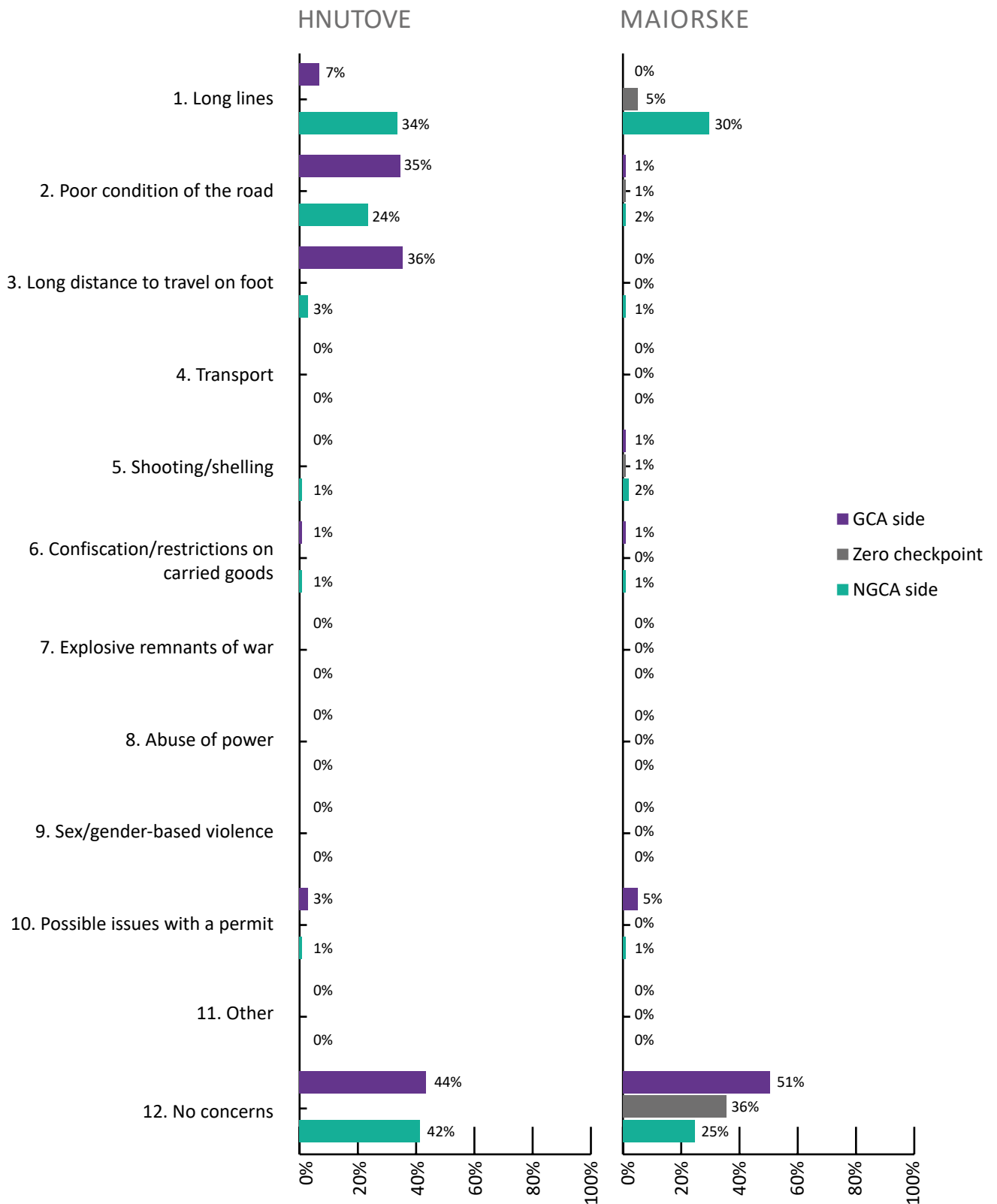
Respondents did not report any concerns about sex- and gender-based violence to monitors. There is a risk that people felt uncomfortable about reporting this type of concerns.



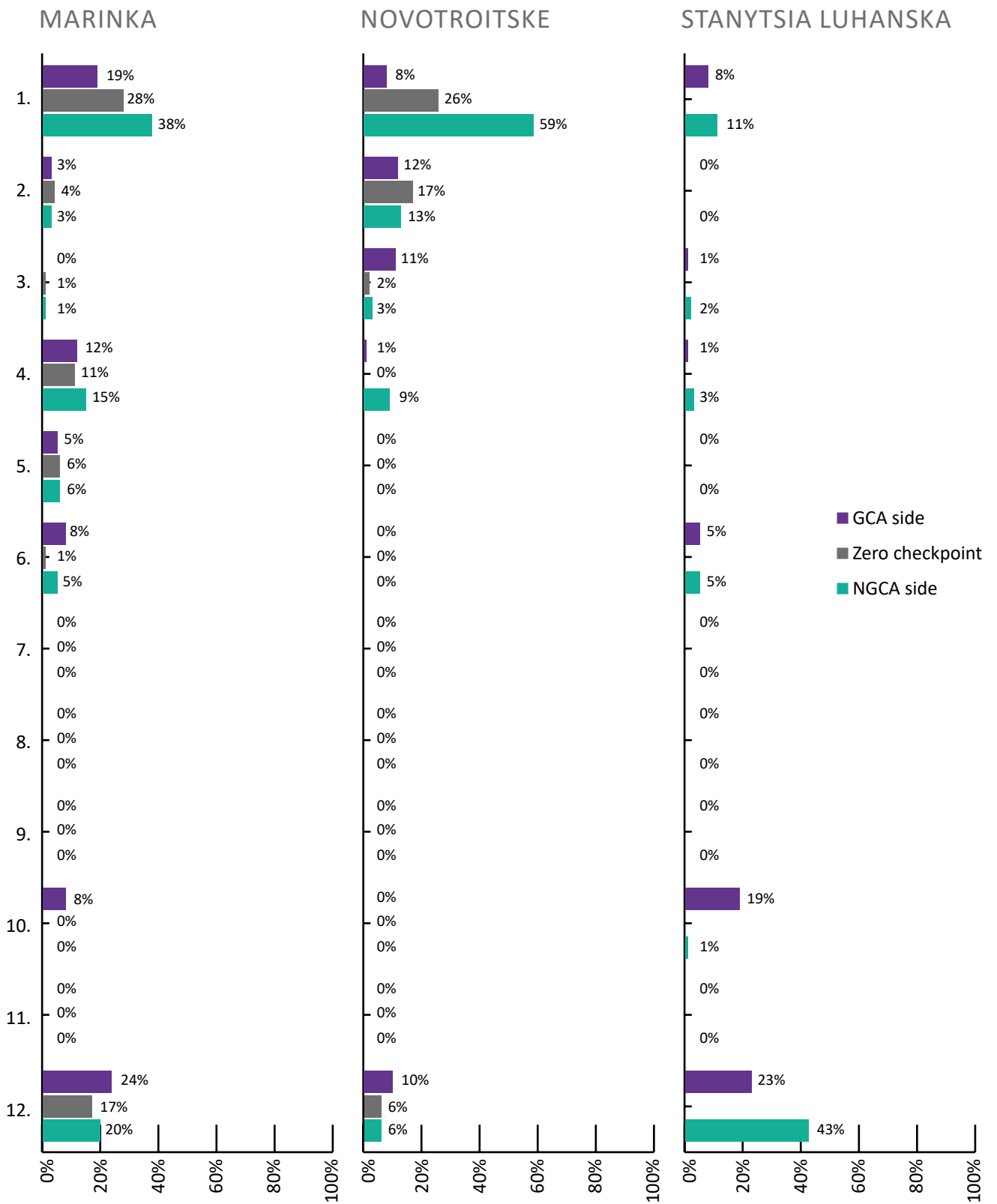
Waiting to cross at Stanytsia Luhanska EEC



## ▶ CONCERNS WHILE CROSSING THE CONTACT LINE<sup>3</sup>



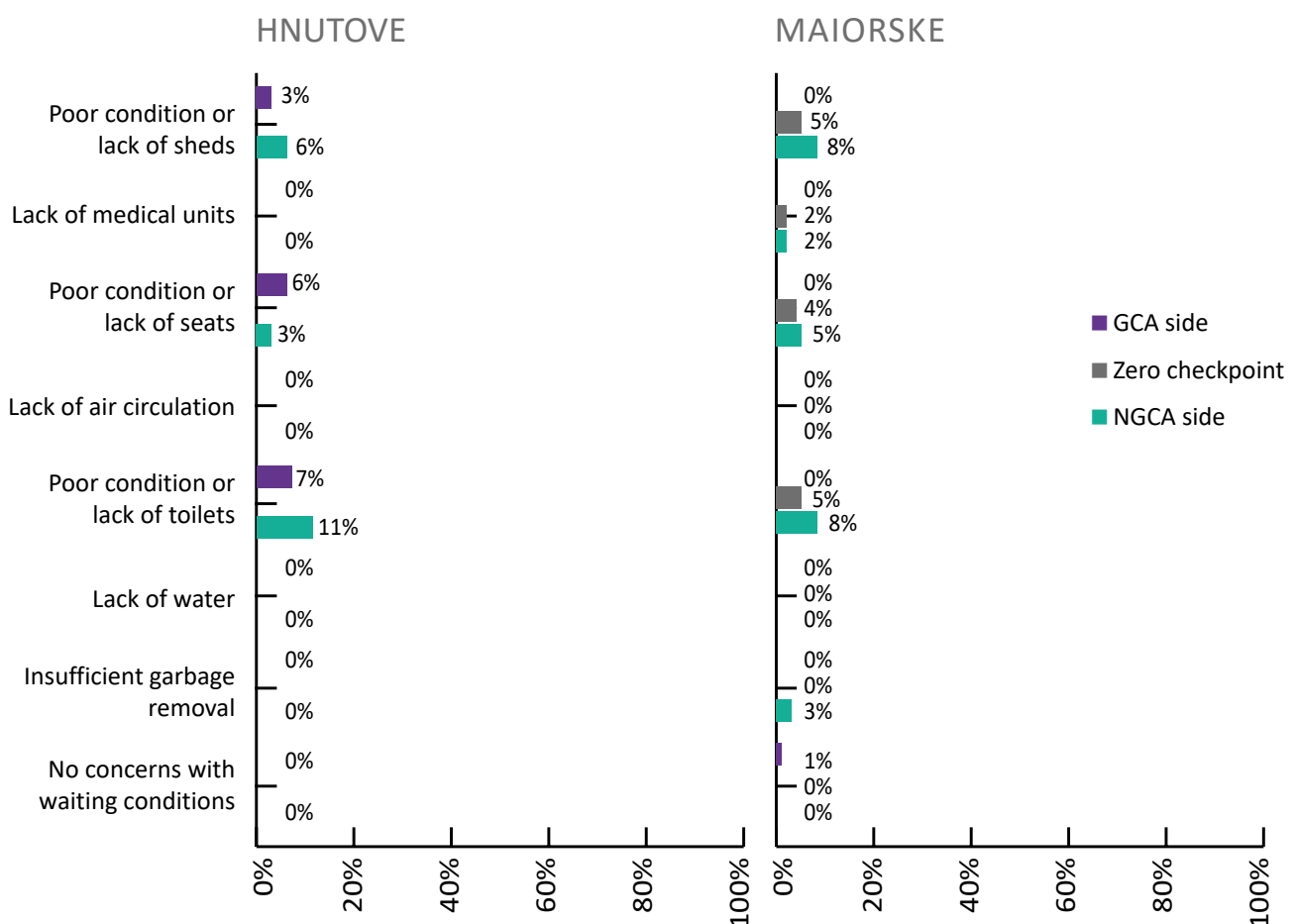
<sup>3</sup> Respondents could indicate several concerns

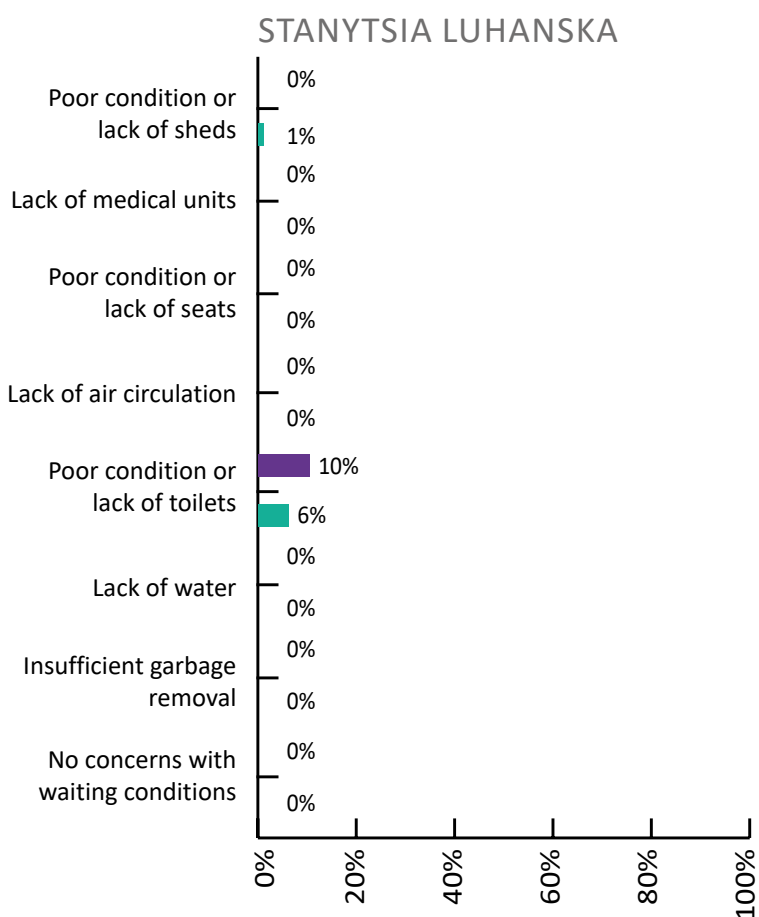
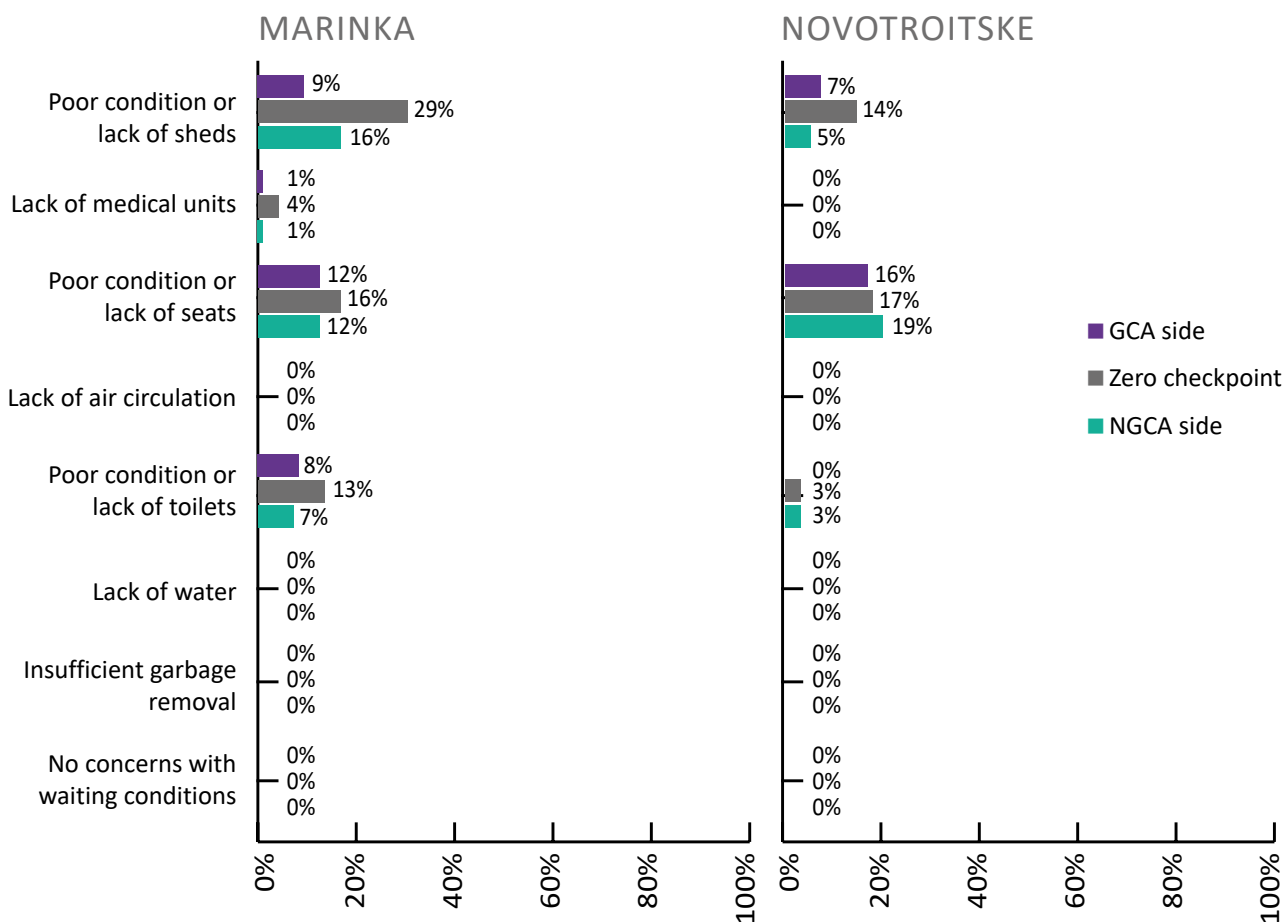


## WAITING CONDITIONS

Among the five EECPs, the conditions at Hnutove were the least concerning to the respondents interviewed there. The flow of people travelling through Hnutove EECP is the lowest, which also affects the level of concern among respondents. In contrast, the highest share of concerned respondents was at Novotroitske EECP, which is a particularly crowded. Concerns about sheds were quite common at all EECPs, as well as concerns about toilets and their conditions. Most of these complaints were related to the insufficient maintenance of the bathroom facilities. Throughout the survey period there were numerous complaints about the closure of toilets which had been installed during the reconstruction period at the EECPs, and that janitors were apparently taking down the signs for those toilets in order to avoid work.

### ► CONCERNS WITH WAITING CONDITIONS (BY EECP)



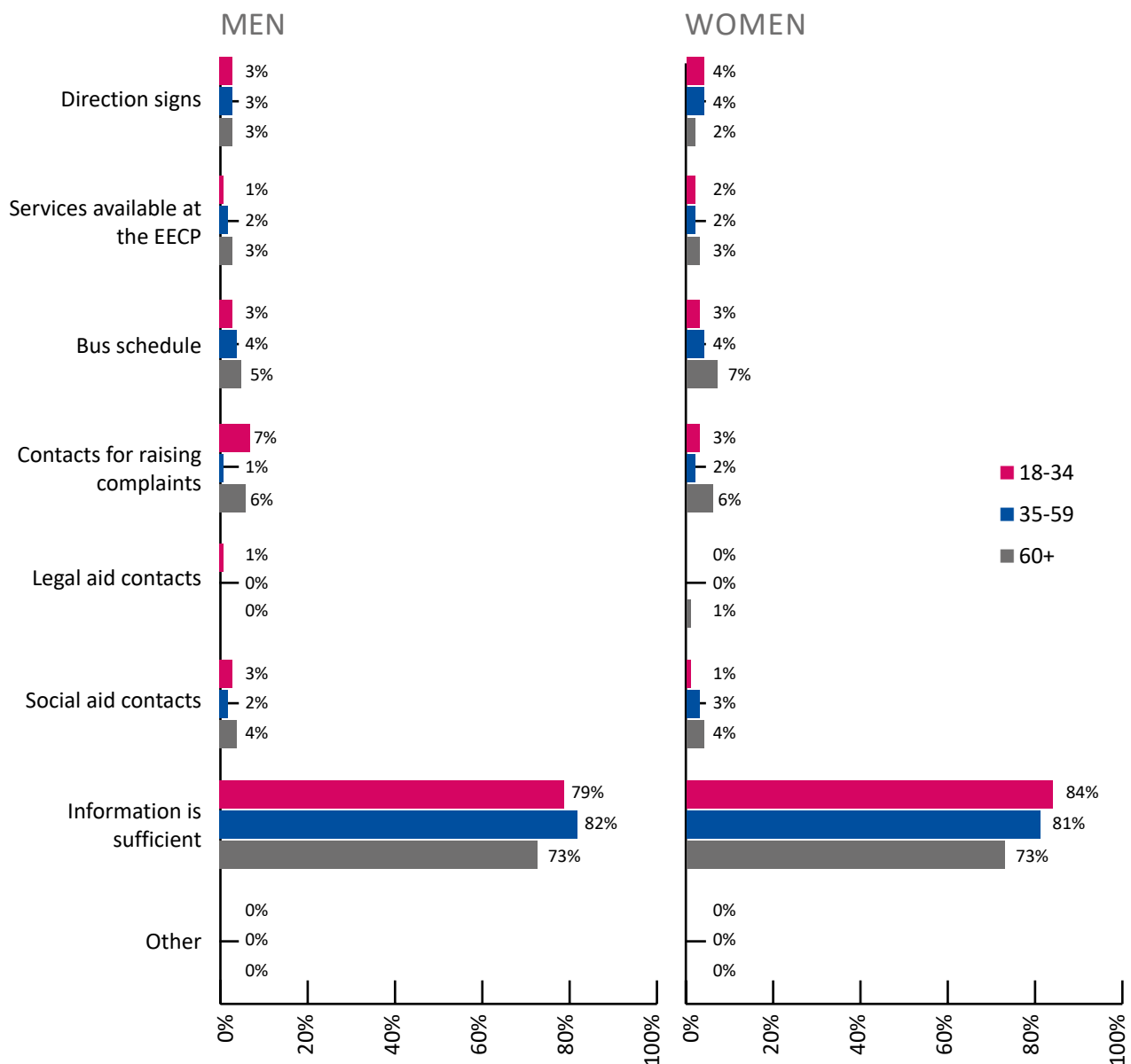


# AWARENESS OF RESPONDENTS

82% of all respondents did not feel they lacked any information. However, it should be noted that 5% of respondents mentioned the poor visibility of contact information to whom they might address their complaints regarding conditions at the EECs or the lack of information regarding the bus schedules. 3% of respondents mentioned the lack of information about services available at the EEC (medical aid, water supply, toilets etc.).

Hnutove had the highest percentage of respondents (87%) who felt information was sufficiently provided at the EEC. It is also important to know that the shares of respondents varied based between age groups. Although the respondents over 60 years age tended to travel across the contact line more often, they also felt somewhat less informed (27%) than respondents aged 18-34 and 35-59 (both 18%).

## TOPICS FOR WHICH INFORMATION IS INSUFFICIENT (BY GENDER AND AGE GROUP OF RESPONDENTS)



Percentage are calculated inside each group (by age). Respondents could indicate several issues.



In addition to the survey, R2P monitors conducted protection monitoring through direct observation at all five EECPs. The information below describes the situation observed by R2P monitors the end of March. Weather conditions continue to affect the crossing process. This can be hazardous for the life and health of people travelling across the contact line. Tables below list key items and services expected at EECPs and indicate their availability for each EECP.

In the first six months of 2020 R2P monitors reported five fatalities that happened near the EECP: Two men died at Marinka EECP. One fatality happened at Maioreske EECP, another one at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP. One person died at Novotroitske EECP.

Also, according to the information from public sources, an one person died at "Horlivka" checkpoint in NGCA.

### HNUTOVE EECP

	Amount	Condition	Location
Waiting area (modules)	⚠	✓	✓
Sun/rain shed	⚠	✓	⚠
Air conditioning/ventilation	✓	✓	✓
Heaters	✓	✓	✓
Seats	⚠	✓	✓
Beds/bed linen (in SES tents)	✓	✓	✓
Disposable utensils	✓	✓	✓
Potable water	✓	✓	✓
Sanitary water	✓	✓	✓
Garbage bins	✓	✓	✓
Toilets	✓	✓	✓
Soap/hand sanitizer	✓	✓	✓
Toilet paper	⚠	✓	✓
Transport connection between the "O" and GCA checkpoints	✖	✖	✖
Wheelchairs	⚠	✓	✓

✓ - sufficient amount/proper condition/convenient location

⚠ - insufficient amount/poor condition or inappropriate maintenance/inconvenient location

✖ - completely absent

There is a need to extend the sheds and install more seats on the GCA entrance from the NGCA side.

Long walking distances remains an issue at this EECP. Travellers have to cover over a kilometre on foot. In 2020, Hnutove is the only EECP with this issue.

Première Urgence Internationale provides medical assistance at the EECP on a schedule (8:00 – 15:30).

## MAIORSKE EECP

	Amount	Condition	Location
Waiting area (modules)	⚠	✓	⚠
Sun/rain shed	⚠	✓	⚠
Air conditioning/ventilation	⚠	✓	✓
Heaters	✓	✓	✓
Seats	✗	✗	✗
Beds/bed linen (in SES tents)	✓	⚠	✓
Disposable utensils	⚠	✗	⚠
Potable water	✓	✓	✓
Sanitary water	✓	✓	✓
Garbage bins	✓	✓	✓
Toilets	✓	✓	✓
Soap/hand sanitizer	⚠	⚠	✓
Toilet paper	✓	⚠	✓
Transport connection between the “0” and GCA checkpoints	✓	✓	✓
Wheelchairs	⚠	✗	✗

- ✓ - sufficient amount/proper condition/convenient location
- ⚠ - insufficient amount/poor condition or inappropriate maintenance/inconvenient location
- ✗ - completely absent

The reconstruction was conducted at the EECP in 2019, which significantly improved the conditions: installation of waiting terminals, passport control booths, toilets, and sheds. An Oschadbank branch was built. In addition, a canteen and three shops were opened.

Meanwhile, pedestrian area still lacks sheds, and there are still no seats near the Coordination Group representatives module.

Bomb shelters are available at both sides of the EECP though there is no sign indicating where it is on the NGCA side.

A table for filling out applications provided by UNHCR was set up near the Coordination Group; a shed was erected above the table to protect it from the weather.

Première Urgence Internationale provides medical assistance at the EECP on a schedule (8:30 – 15:30).

## MARINKA EEC

	Amount	Condition	Location
Waiting area (modules)	✓	✓	✓
Sun/rain shed	✓	✓	✓
Air conditioning/ventilation	!	✓	✓
Heaters	!	✓	✓
Seats	!	✓	✓
Beds/bed linen (in SES tents)	✓	!	✓
Disposable utensils	✗	✗	✗
Potable water	✓	✓	✓
Sanitary water	✓	✓	✓
Garbage bins	✓	✓	✓
Toilets	✓	✓	✓
Soap/hand sanitizer	!	!	!
Toilet paper	✓	✓	✓
Transport connection between the “O” and GCA checkpoints	✓	✓	✓
Wheelchairs	!	✓	!

- ✓ - sufficient amount/proper condition/convenient location
- ! - insufficient amount/poor condition or inappropriate maintenance/inconvenient location
- ✗ - completely absent

Despite general satisfactory condition of the EEC, a number of issues remain there: toilets have poor water supply water well malfunction. The EEC lacks disposable dishes in the State Emergency tent, and hygienic products in toilets.

Conditions in the newly constructed bomb shelter are concerning: the ceiling is leaking, there are no doors and places to seat.

People often complain about the lack of a direct route between the EEC and the town of Marinka.

EEC staff articulate insufficient capacity at the passport control.

Première Urgence Internationale provides medical assistance at the EEC on a schedule (8:00 – 15:00).

## NOVOTROITSKE EECF

	Amount	Condition	Location
Waiting area (modules)	✓	✓	✓
Sun/rain shed	!	!	!
Air conditioning/ventilation	✓	!	✓
Heaters	!	!	✓
Seats	!	!	!
Beds/bed linen (in SES tents)	✓	!	✓
Disposable utensils	✗	✗	✗
Potable water	✓	✓	✓
Sanitary water	✓	✓	✓
Garbage bins	✓	✓	✓
Toilets	✓	✓	✓
Soap/hand sanitizer	!	!	!
Toilet paper	✗	✗	✗
Transport connection between the “0” and GCA checkpoints	✓	✓	✓
Wheelchairs	✗	✗	✗

- ✓ - sufficient amount/proper condition/convenient location
- ! - insufficient amount/poor condition or inappropriate maintenance/inconvenient location
- ✗ - completely absent

The infrastructure at Novotroitske EECF is in a rather good condition. Among the main issues, R2P monitors indicated there are still no seats and sheds near mobile Oschadbank office, and visitors complain about insufficient branch capacity. Thus, people often have to stand under the sun or sit on the ground, waiting in lines.

The EECF lacks disposable dishes in the State Emergency tent, and hygienic products in toilets.

The hygienic condition of toilets at the EECF remained an important issue: sewage pits were overfilled, and wastewater flowed into the neighbouring fields.

The bomb shelter and mine signs are in a satisfactory condition and conveniently located. The bomb shelter is supposedly accessible for people with impaired mobility.

EECF staff articulate insufficient capacity at the passport control.

Première Urgence Internationale provides medical assistance at the EECF on a schedule (8:00 – 15:30).

## STANYTSIA LUHANSKA EECP

	Amount	Condition	Location
Waiting area (modules)	✓	✓	✓
Sun/rain shed	✓	✓	✓
Air conditioning/ventilation	✓	✓	✓
Heaters	!	✓	✓
Seats	✓	✓	✓
Beds/bed linen (in SES tents)	✗	✗	✗
Disposable utensils	✗	✗	✗
Potable water	!	✓	!
Sanitary water	!	✓	!
Garbage bins	✓	✓	✓
Toilets	✓	!	✓
Soap/hand sanitizer	✗	✗	✗
Toilet paper	✗	✗	✗
Transport connection between the "O" and GCA checkpoints	✓	✓	✓
Wheelchairs	!	✓	✓

- ✓ - sufficient amount/proper condition/convenient location
- ! - insufficient amount/poor condition or inappropriate maintenance/inconvenient location
- ✗ - completely absent

Stanytsia Luhanska remains the only EECP with no vehicle traffic, as the renovated bridge is not wide enough. The reconstruction of the bridge has been a disputed issue for the parties of the conflict throughout the entire period of the EECP's operation. The vehicle line remains highly demanded. Opening of Zolote EECP in Luhansk Oblast would also alleviate the situation; however, the parties did not reach a compromise regarding this issue.

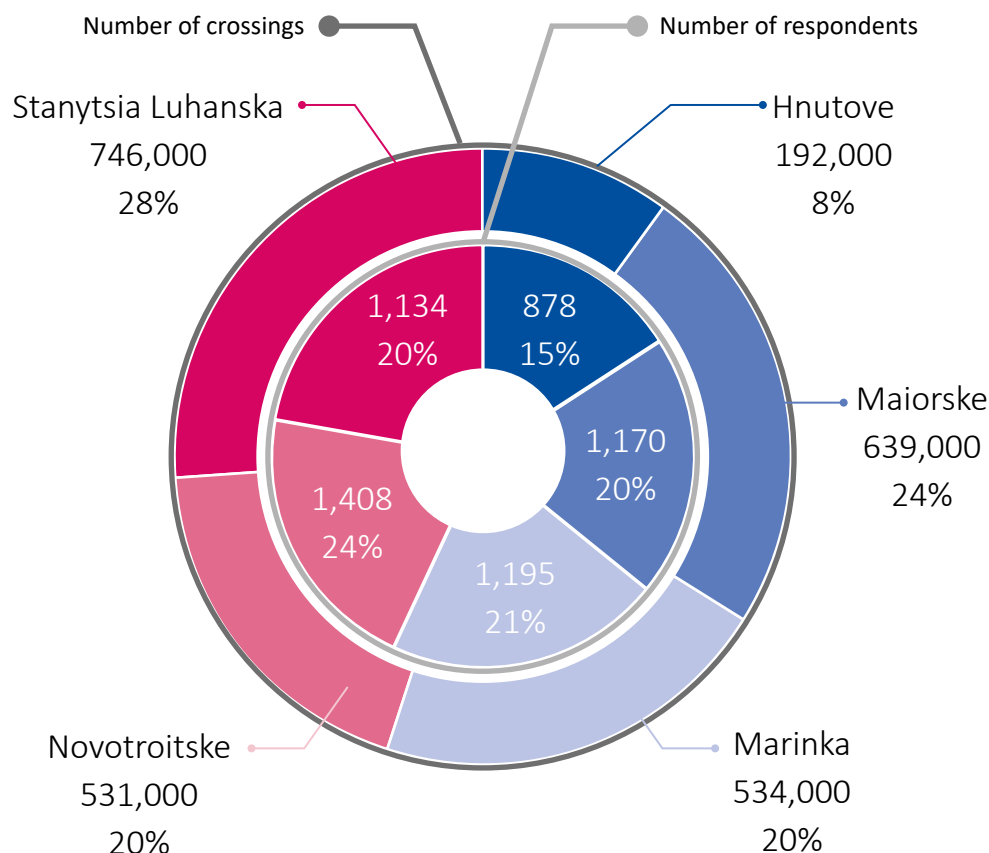
The bomb shelter is in satisfactory condition, however, it is inconveniently located behind the fence.

Medical assistance at the EECP is provided by "Liniiia Zhyttia", International Committee of the Red Cross and the State Emergency Service medical staff.

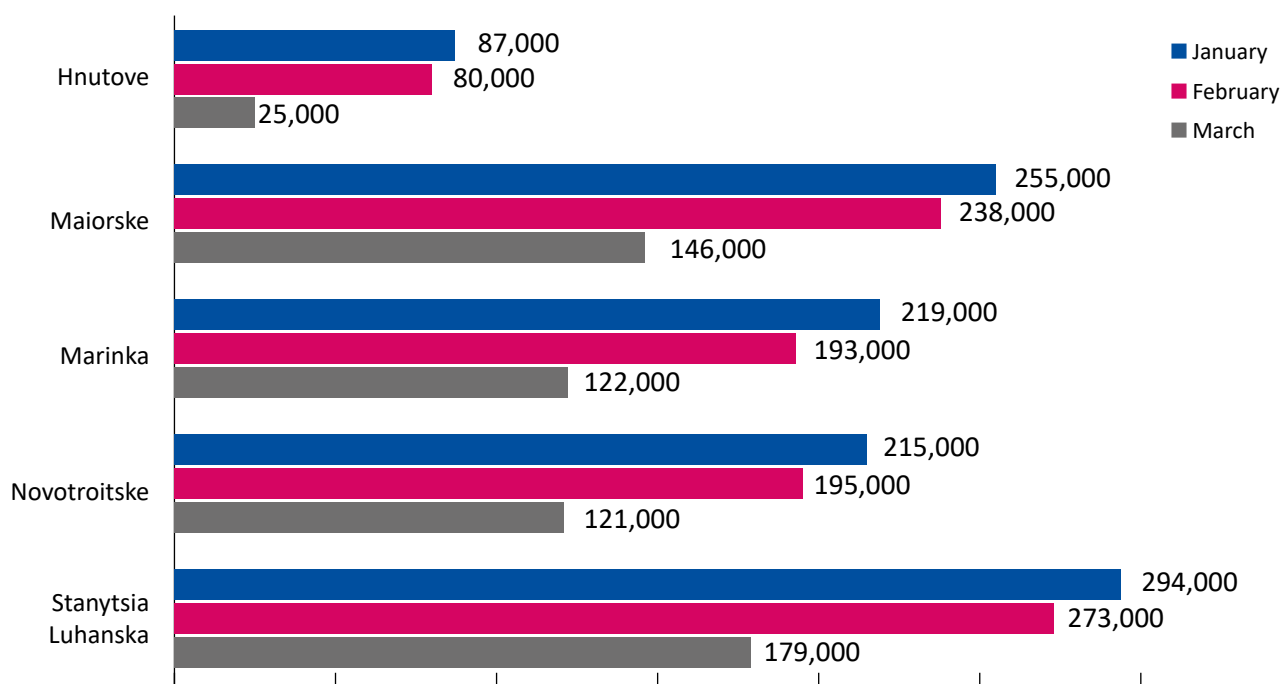


# ANNEX 1. EECF CROSSINGS DURING JANUARY-JUNE 2020<sup>4</sup>

## NUMBERS OF CROSSINGS AND RESPONDENTS (BY EECF)



## NUMBER OF CROSSINGS (BY MONTHLY)



On 22 March, EECFs suspended operations, and slightly over 14,000 persons received permission to cross at all five EECFs during the rest of reporting period.

<sup>4</sup> General statistics on crossings are available at the UNHCR dashboard visualizing data from the State Border Guard Service – <https://goo.gl/TzbU8c>