

CROSSING THE LINE OF CONTACT

MONITORING REPORT



May 2018

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INTRODUCTION

This report provides the results of the May 2018 round of the survey conducted by the Charitable Foundation «The Right to Protection» (R2P) at the five entry-exit checkpoints (EECPs) to 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. Instead 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 traveling towards both the GCA and NGCA. 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 data collected from 2 to 30 May 2018 during 43 visits to the five EECPs. This reporting period was characterized

by intensified hostilities at the line of contact, the beginning of the Independent External Evaluation (exams for admission to universities) and warming weather.

OVERALL SUMMARY



Stanytsia Luhanska EECP

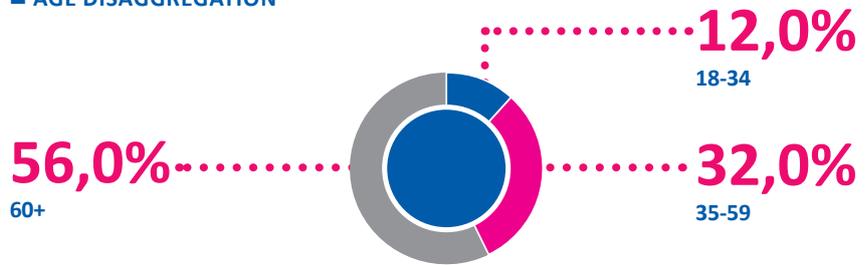
- The total number of respondents is gradually increasing which correlates with the increase in the number of crossings during the warm season. The overall demographics remain relatively stable throughout all survey rounds.
- Like in April, GCA residents had far fewer reasons to travel across the line of contact than NGCA residents, who must solve issues related to documentation/benefits, legal and banking services, which are impossible or very difficult in the NGCA. The disaggregation of reasons for crossing remains relatively stable.
- On average, respondents, who previously crossed the line of contact in May, spent 2-3 hours to pass through all checkpoints. It took more time to pass checkpoints on the NGCA side at all EECPs except Stanytsia Luhanska.
- Significant changes in the level of concerns were observed in comparison to the previous reporting period. Due to the intensified hostilities the level of concern about shelling and shooting increased at Hnutove and Maiorske EECPs. Waiting conditions caused more concern as well due to the increasing temperature.

1 DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

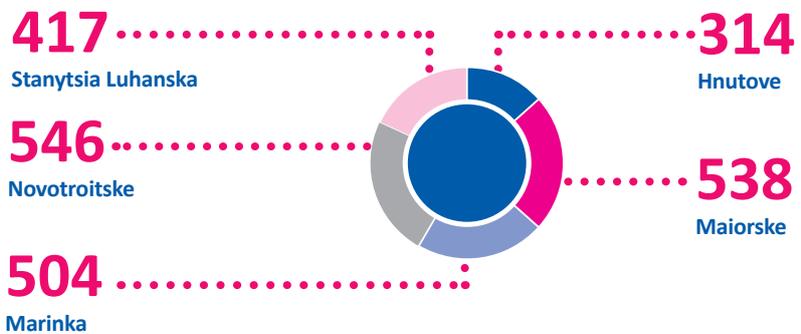
During the reporting period, R2P monitors surveyed a total of **2,319** persons crossing the line of contact, which is 140 more than in April. **49.4%** of them were travelling to the NGCA and **50.6%** to the GCA.

34.8% of respondents were male and **65.2%** were female. **5.8%** of respondents were travelling with children. Elderly people remain the largest age group (**56%** of all respondents), which is related to the legislative requirements regarding the 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



Novotroitske EEC

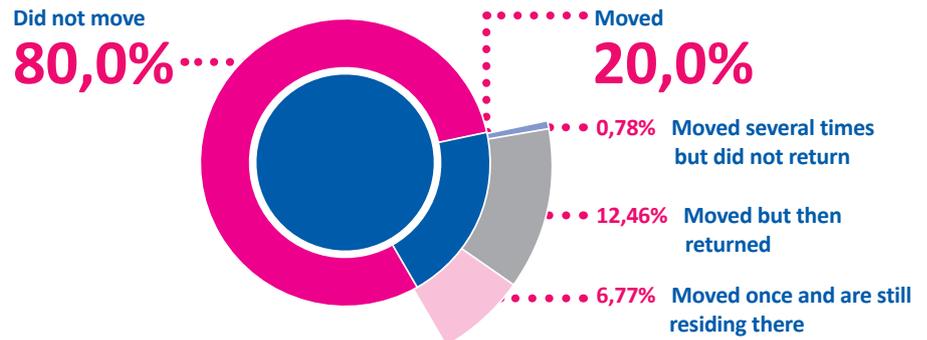
2 RESIDENCE, DISPLACEMENT AND RETURN

95% of respondents stated that they resided in the NGCA prior to the conflict. 88.6% of all respondents cited the NGCA as their place of residence at the time of the survey.

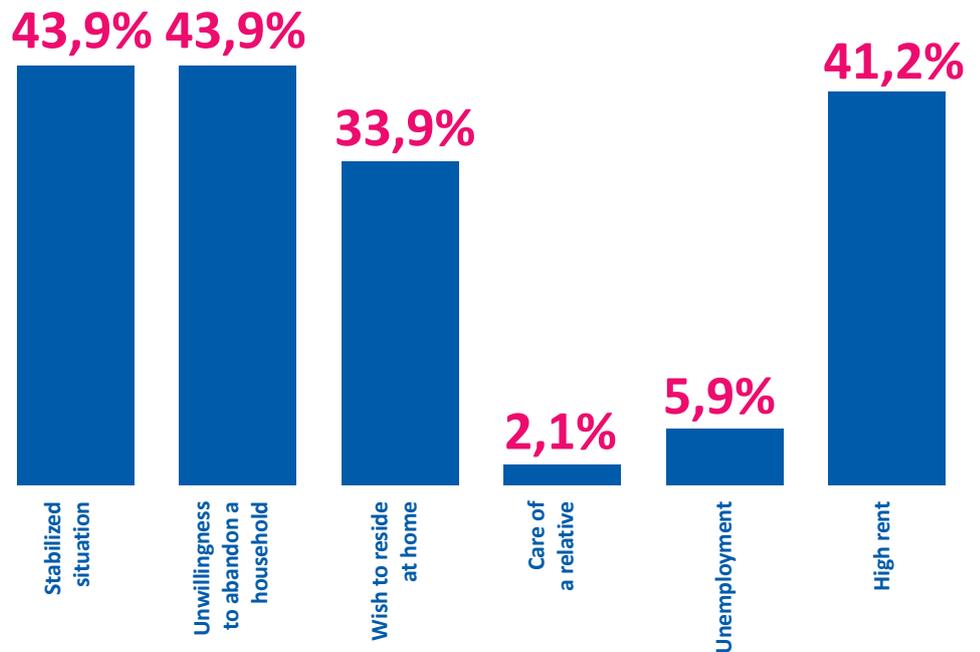
The tendency of GCA residents having far fewer reasons to travel across the line of contact than NGCA residents remained unchanged. 80% of all respondents stated that they have never changed their place of residents due to the conflict. Among the other 20% of the respondents who moved at least once, more than half (12.5% of all respondents) ultimately returned to their original place of residence¹.

The most common reasons for return indicated by respondents who changed their place of residence but then returned were unwillingness to abandon a household (43.9%) and stabilized situation (43.9%). Another common reason for return (41.2%) was high rent. Though there was a significant difference in numbers in comparison to the previous reporting period (for instance, 41.2% of the returnees surveyed in May explained their decision by unaffordable high rent while in April that option was chosen by 18.7%), 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



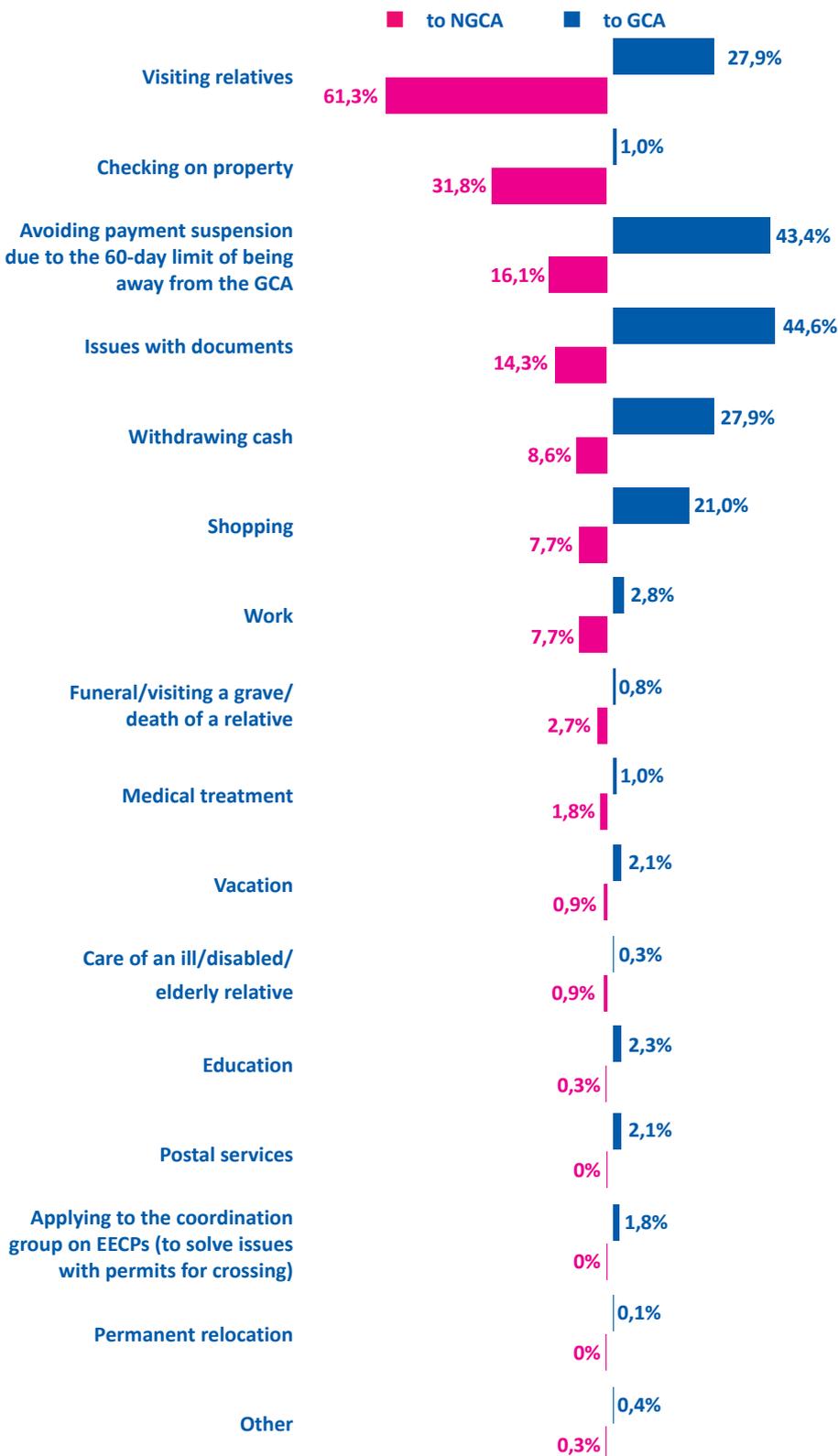
¹ It is important to mention that the disaggregation should not be extrapolated to the whole population as the survey does not cover internally displaced persons or NGCA residents who do not travel through the EECs.

² Respondents could mention several reasons.

3 REASONS AND FREQUENCY

Only 14.5% of all respondents indicated the NGCA as the trip destination. The reasons for crossing are substantially different depending on the destination. The respondents were mostly traveling to the GCA to solve issues with documents, avoid payment suspension due to the 60-day limit of being away from the GCA, withdraw cash or visit their relatives. The most common reasons to go to the NGCA were visiting relatives and checking on property. The overall disaggregation in reasons for crossing remains relatively stable. Among other reasons respondents mentioned for travelling were submitting documents for a permit to cross the line of contact and to pass the Independent External Evaluation in order to pursue higher education.

■ REASONS FOR CROSSING BY DIRECTION⁴



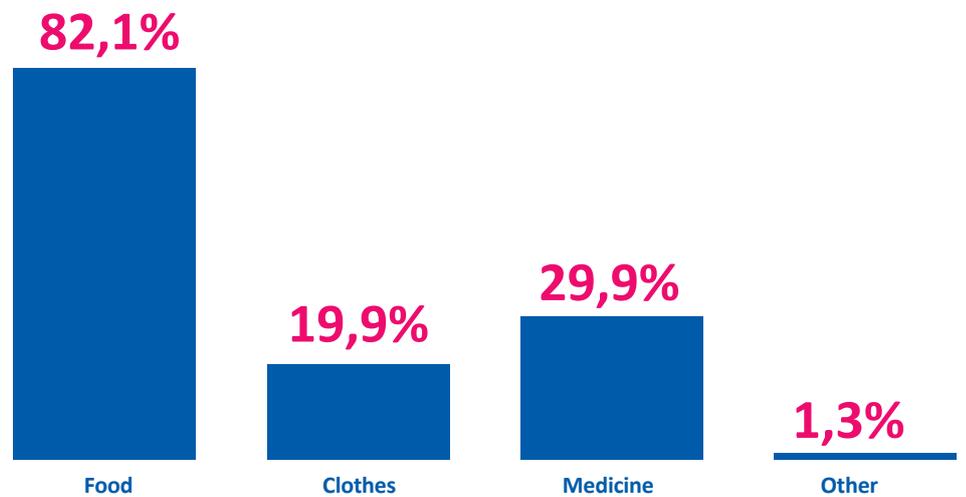
³ The percentage was calculated based on the total number of people who indicated either the GCA or the NGCA as their destination.

19.1% of all respondents indicated shopping as their reason for crossing the line of contact. 94.1% of such respondents were travelling to the GCA. The proportion remains relatively stable with food being the most commonly purchased item.

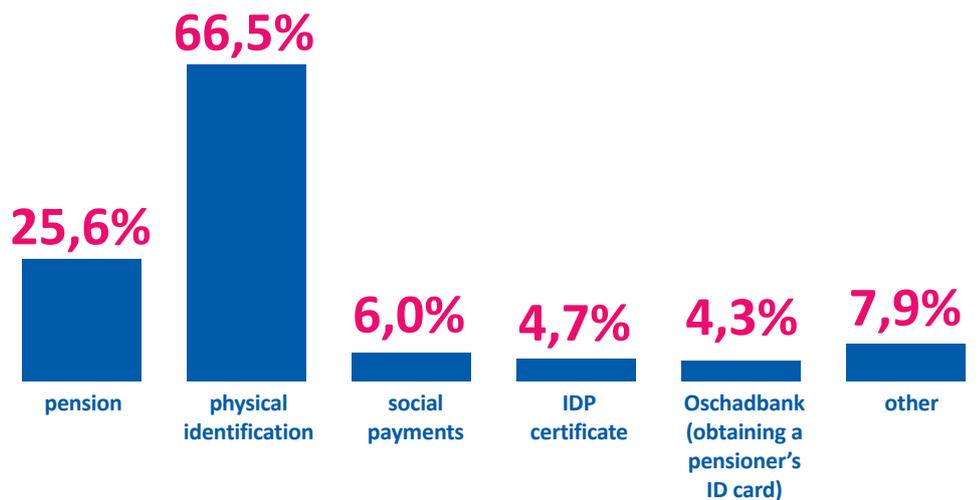
The need to pass physical identification (66.5% of respondents who were crossing to solve issues with documents) and pensions (25.6%) remain the most common documentation issues. Among other issues respondents mostly mentioned submitting documents for internal or international passports and obtaining death or birth certificates.

The majority of respondents (60.9%) stated that they cross the line of contact quarterly. Considering the age disaggregation, such share of respondents travelling quarterly and monthly is often related to the requirements imposed on people with NGCA residence registration by Ukrainian legislation for obtaining pensions and social benefits, such as verification of actual place of residence and physical identification at Oschadbank. It is noteworthy that the share of respondents who cross the line of contact monthly has increased by 8.8%, while the share of respondents who cross the line of contact quarterly decreased by 8.6%.

■ TYPE OF GOODS PURCHASED



■ TYPE OF DOCUMENT ISSUE



■ FREQUENCY OF CROSSING THE LINE OF CONTACT

18-34



35-59



60+



19.1% of those surveyed stated that they have previously crossed the line of contact during the reporting period. Further graphs in this section contain information on duration of crossing in May.

The majority (55.6%) of such respondents spent 2 to 3 hours in total crossing the EECP on both sides.

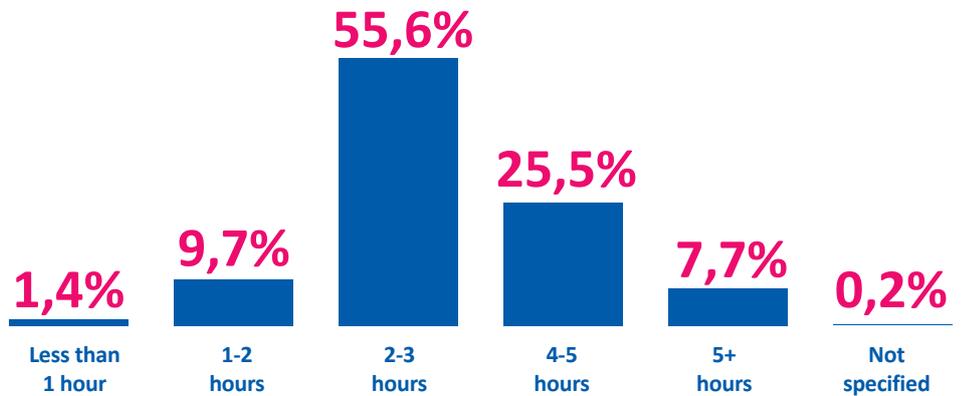
It took the most time to cross Maiorske EECP. Over 50% of those respondents who crossed the line of contact at Maiorske EECP in May had to spend 4 hours or more.

The largest share of respondents who spent less than 2 hours crossing the line of contact was at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP. It is important to note that as the bridge at Stanytsia Luhanska is damaged and there is no roadway for vehicles. It takes about an hour to walk between the GCA and NGCA checkpoints.

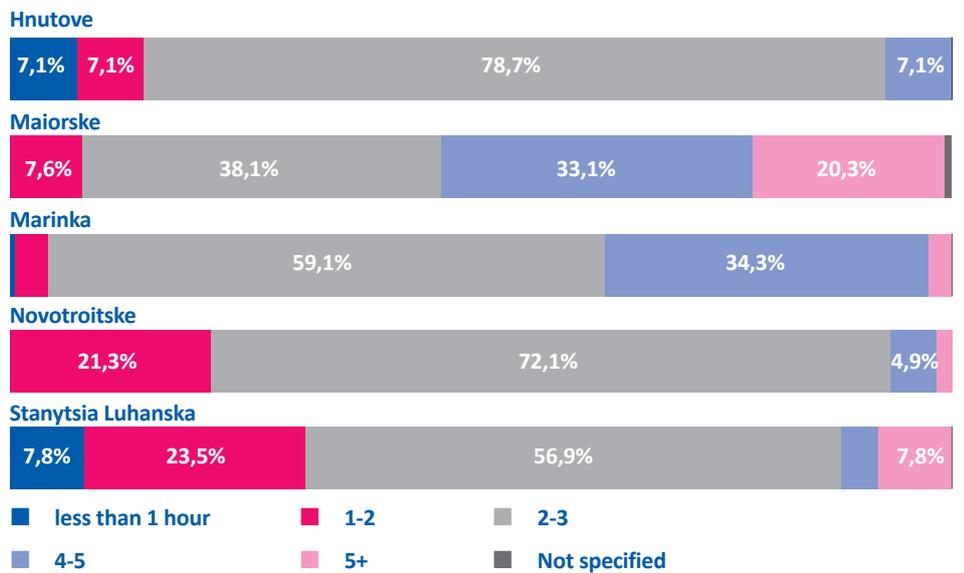
The majority of such respondents at Maiorske (94.9%), Novotroitske (80.3%) and Marinka (67.7%) stated that it took more time to pass the NGCA checkpoints. Such tendency correlates to information learned during monitoring visits: people crossing the line of contact frequently complained about intentional delays on the NGCA side.

At Hnutove EECP, which is the least busy, the duration of crossing in the majority of cases was approximately the same at both the GCA and NGCA checkpoints. Stanytsia Luhanska EECP was the only one where the majority (78.4%) of respondents stated that they spent more time crossing the GCA checkpoints. According to information received during monitoring visits, the control procedure in the GCA is more thorough. At the same time, checkpoints in the GCA lack staff and equipment to process the data correspondent with the scale of heavy traffic at the EECP.

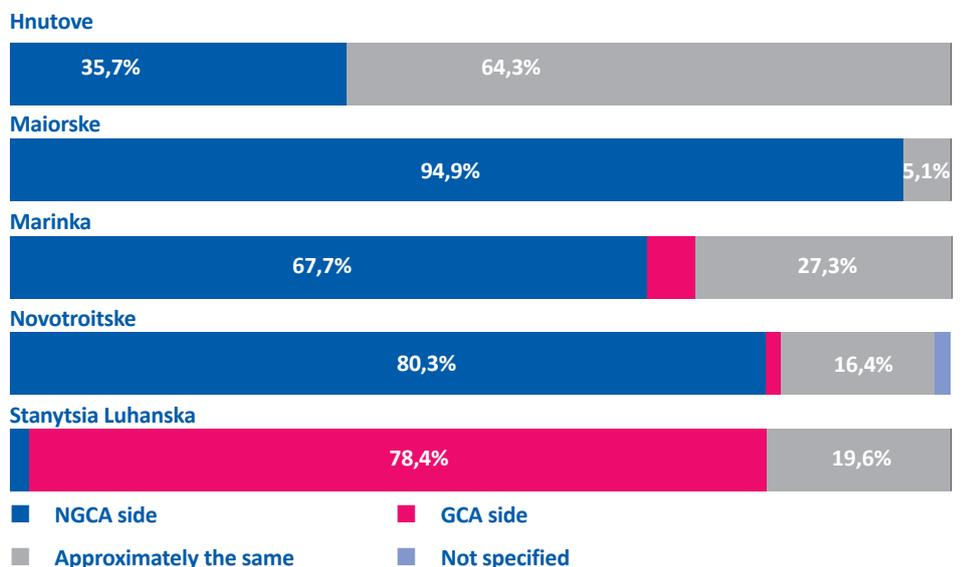
DURATION OF PREVIOUS CROSSING



DURATION BY EECP



CHECKPOINTS LONGER TO CROSS



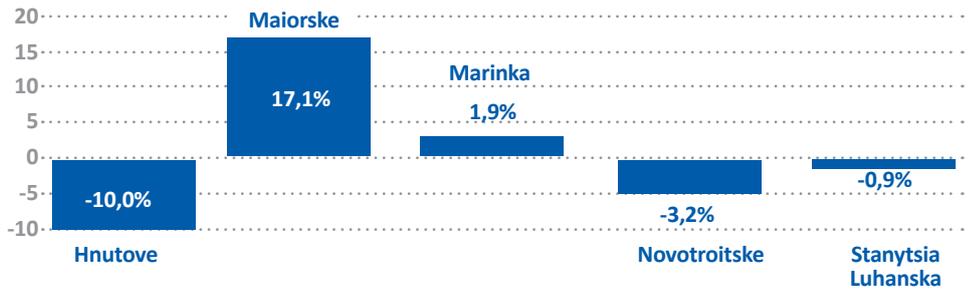
4 CONCERNS WHILE CROSSING THE LINE OF CONTACT

In comparison to the previous reporting period significant changes in the level of concerns were observed. The number of respondents who did not mention any complaints increased by 10.1% at Hnutove EECP and decreased by 17.1% at Maiorske EECP. The level of most common concerns (transport, road condition, lines) at Hnutove EECP decreased in comparison to the data collected in April. At Maiorske the level of the main concern (long lines) increased from 56.2% in April to 69.3% in May.

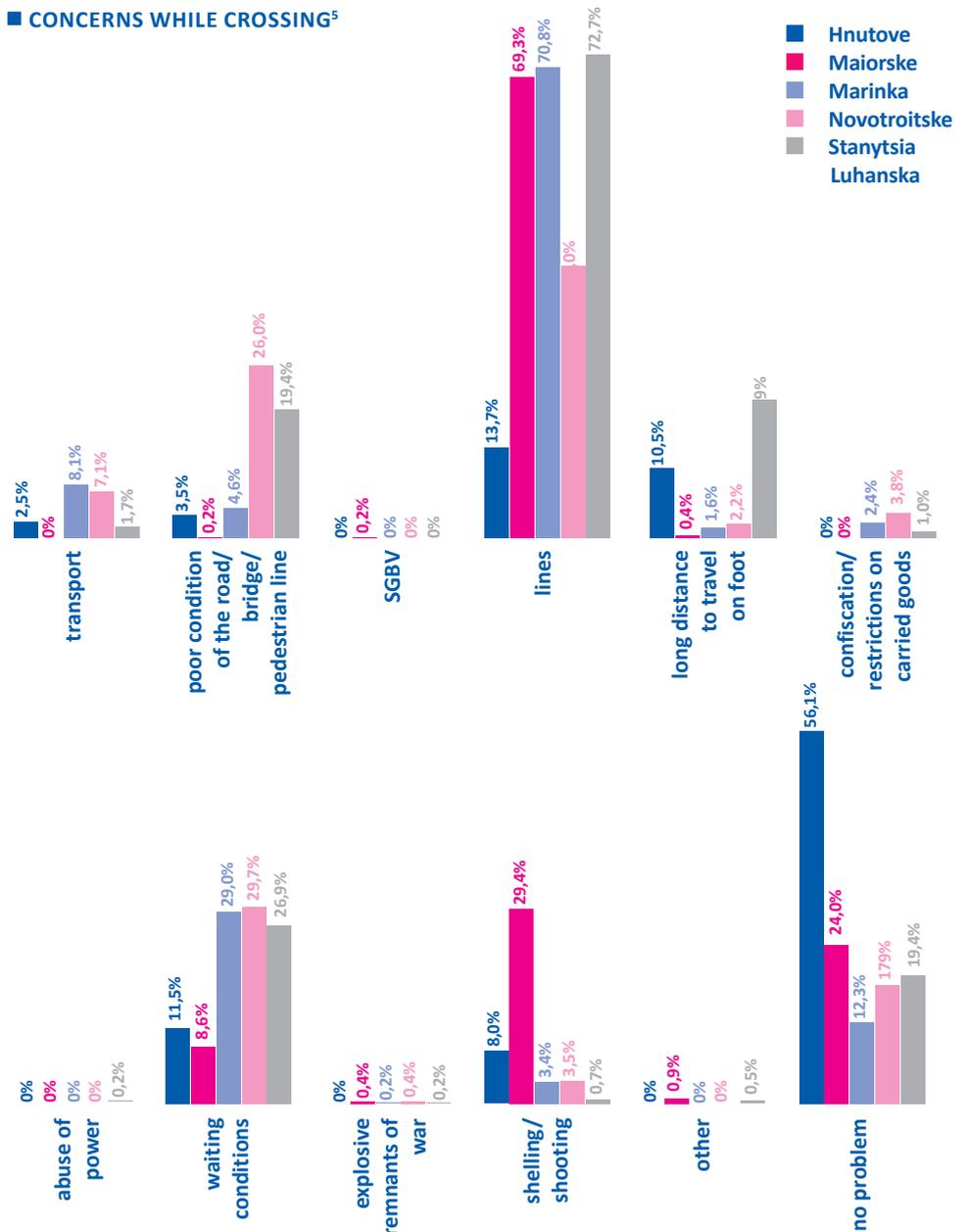
Due to the intensified shelling, the share of such concern increased considerably at Hnutove (from 0.5% in April to 8% in May) and Maiorske (from 15.1% in April to 29.4% in May) EECPs.

At Marinka and Novotroitske EECP the share of concerns regarding the poor condition of the road decreased by 19.2% and 12.1% respectively. At the same time respondents at both EECPs were more concerned about the lines and waiting conditions. Waiting conditions also became a major concern at Stanytsia Luhanska, increasing from 5% in April to 26.9% in May.

■ DYNAMICS IN GENERAL LEVEL OF CONCERN



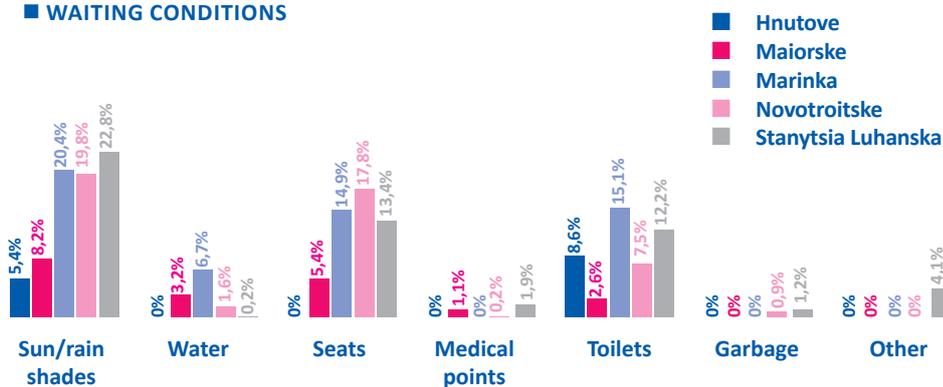
■ CONCERNS WHILE CROSSING⁵



⁴ Respondents could mention several concerns.

Waiting conditions were a cause of significant concern in May. At all EECs there were more complaints about the lack of sunshades. Even though there are State Emergency Service tents located at EECs, it is not feasible to use them during the crossing procedure as people are afraid to miss their turn. The lack of sunshades and stuffiness in the summer season can be hazardous to life and health, especially for elderly people. During monitoring visits numerous cases were reported of people losing consciousness.

■ WAITING CONDITIONS

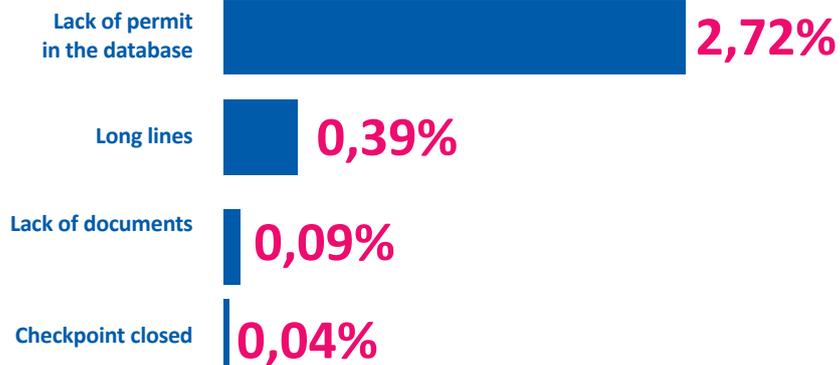


Hnutove EEC

5 INABILITY TO CROSS

Only 3.24% of all respondents mentioned incidents of not being able to cross during the past six months. The permit missing from the database was the most common reason.

REASONS FOR INABILITY TO CROSS⁵



Marinka EEC

⁵ Respondents could mention several concerns.

