

CROSSING THE CONTACT LINE:

August 2020 Snapshot

KEY DEVELOPMENTS AT EECPS

By the end of August, three out of four EECPs in Donetsk oblast remain closed. Novotroitske EECP remains the only EECP in Donetsk oblast where it is possible to cross the contact line according to pre-agreed lists. The passage of people is conducted every Monday and Friday. Thus, there were **nine so-called humanitarian corridors** according to pre-agreed lists:

03.08.	GCA	←	NGCA	130 people	21.08	GCA	←	NGCA	129 people
	GCA	→	NGCA	187 people		GCA	→	NGCA	165 people
07.08	GCA	←	NGCA	79 people	24.08	GCA	←	NGCA	113 people
	GCA	→	NGCA	193 people		GCA	→	NGCA	204 people
10.08	GCA	←	NGCA	111 people	28.08	GCA	←	NGCA	118 people
	GCA	→	NGCA	169 people		GCA	→	NGCA	257 people
14.08	GCA	←	NGCA	117 people	31.08	GCA	←	NGCA	99 people
	GCA	→	NGCA	188 people		GCA	→	NGCA	228 people
17.08	GCA	←	NGCA	130 people					
	GCA	→	NGCA	206 people					

In total 1,026 people were eligible to cross to GCA in Donetsk oblast. In turn, 1,797 people crossed the contact line to NGCA in Donetsk oblast. The process of crossing is the same as it was in the previous month: one needs to be placed on a list, compiled by de-facto authorities in NGCA. It entails a complex procedure of document submission, including to writing an application to the NGCA “Emergency headquarters for fighting the spread of COVID-19” via an email or Telegram. In addition, people who are willing to cross to GCA are required to sign a document at the NGCA checkpoint on non-return to the NGCA side until the end of the quarantine there (according to people who managed to cross through Novotroitske EECP to GCA). Moreover, residents of the NGCA, upon crossing the checkpoint to NGCA, had to undergo observation during 2 weeks, without any alternative options like self-isolation regime.

In Luhansk oblast, in total over 25,000 people crossed the contact line towards GCA and over 22,000 people to NGCA at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP in August (the data about number of crossing was received during the work-days from SBGS servicemen). At Stanytsia Luhanska EECP, people who want to cross the contact line to NGCA need a residence registration in NGCA Luhansk oblast, as per an interim measure. Subsequently, with the simplification of the crossing procedure, the flow of people increased which caused queues in the first half of the day during the entire month: on some days queues reached about 1,500 people in the direction of GCA. As a result of increased number of crossing, high temperature regime and queues, over 30 people lost consciousness during the August.

During August, 14,149 vulnerable elderly persons were provided with transport support at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP by NGO Proliska e-vehicle.

OTHER OBSERVATIONS AT EECPS



At Novotroitske EECP



At Stanytsia Luhanska EECP

In August, there were many foreigners who attempted to cross the contact line, almost all of them either had improper insurance policy, or had no insurance policy at all. Besides, a new problem has been identified: in cases of foreigner over 80 years old, it is extremely difficult to find an insurance company that issues such insurance. In total, R2P monitors have assisted about ten people with obtaining insurance.

Generally, people still face issues with installing and running the app “Act at Home” at Novotroitske and Stanytsia Luhanska EECPs. Sometimes the app gets overloaded and users are requested to activate the app later. Also, an error window pops up after entering a mobile number. Smartphones with an operating system older than Android 4.4 are unable to install the app. At least 900 people

Every day up to 10 persons stayed for one night under a shed in the neutral area at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP: they were not allowed to return home to the NGCA by de-facto authorities, as people had no confirmation of their residence registration in NGCA. Later, some of them managed to provide certificates from a house maintenance company confirming their NGCA residence.

At Novotroitske EECP on average 10 people (on some days up to 15 people) stayed overnight and more in the SES tent. There are two main categories of people who stayed in SES tent:

- People who could not install the app and they were placed in the SES tent to resolve that issue on the following day, or they were sent to observation (during August approximately 50 people were sent to observation);
- People who awaited the opportunity to be put on the list for crossing;

In anticipation of the possible reopening of the Maiorske EECP, UNHCR installed one shed with benches in front of the Oshadbank branch office there.

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

EECP – entry-exit checkpoint;

SES - State Emergency Service;

UNHCR and the NGO Right to Protection (R2P) are grateful for the generous support provided by donors, including the European Union’s Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO); the Governments of Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom (DFID), the United States of America (PRM) as well as private citizens who are contributing funds through different UNHCR private associations such as España con ACNUR of Spain and the UNO Flüchtlingshilfe of Germany.