

CROSSING THE LINE OF CONTACT

MONITORING REPORT



February 2018

CONTENTS

	INTRODUCTION	4
1	METHODOLOGY	5
2	DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS	6
3	RESIDENCE, DISPLACEMENT AND RETURN	7
4	REASONS AND FREQUENCY	8
5	CONCERNS WHILE CROSSING THE LINE OF CONTACT	10
6	INABILITY TO CROSS	11

INTRODUCTION

This report provides the results of the February 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 survey is a part of the monitoring of violations of the 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. The information collected in the survey helps identify needs, gaps and trends, and provides an evidentiary basis for advocacy efforts.



Maiorske EECP

This report is based on data collected during February 2018, characterized by the deteriorating winter weather conditions, as well as temporary partial restrictions of movement through Maiorske EECP from the GCA side due to a police operation against illegal transport operators in late February.

1 METHODOLOGY

The report is based on a survey of persons crossing the line of contact at the five operating EECPs located in Donetsk (Maiorske, Marinka, Hnutove and Novotroitske) and Luhansk (Stanytsia Luhanska) Oblasts¹. It should be noted that the survey is not representative of the entire population crossing the checkpoints, but provides trends and tendencies concerning crossing the line of contact.

The report comprises data gathered from 2 to 28 February 2018 during 37 visits to the five EECPs in question.

The data collection methodology was the same at all EECPs. R2P monitors surveyed civilians queuing at the EECPs. The survey was conducted anonymously and on a voluntary basis. All persons interviewed for the survey were informed about its purpose. The survey was conducted in the form of personal interviews with people aged 18 and above. The monitors approached every fourth person in line with a request to complete the survey. If a person refused to participate in the survey, monitors proceeded to survey the next fourth person in line.



Stanytsia Luhanska EECP

The monitors reached people waiting to cross the EECPs in the lines for pedestrians and for vehicles. People travelling both to and from the GCA took part in the survey. At all EECPs the monitors had no access beyond the line of people coming from the NGCA at the Ukrainian checkpoints.

¹ General statistics on crossings are available at the UNHCR dashboard visualizing data from the State Border Guard Service – <https://goo.gl/TZbU8c>

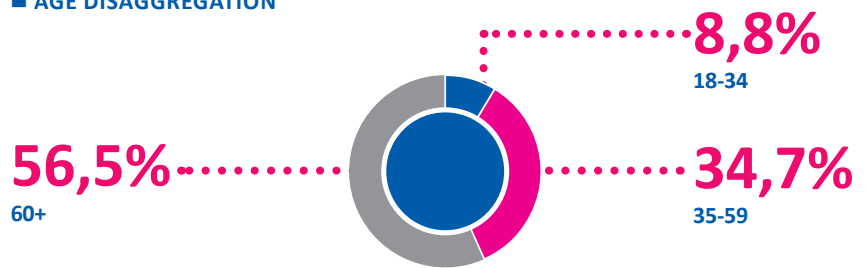
2 DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

During the reporting period, R2P monitors surveyed a total of **1,668** persons crossing the line of contact: **40.4 per cent** of them were travelling to the NGCA and **59.6 per cent** to the GCA.

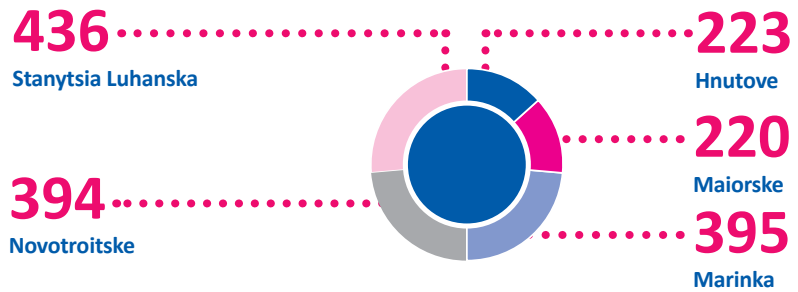
38.4 per cent of respondents were male and **61.6 per cent** were female. **5.8 per cent** of respondents were travelling with children.

In February, monitors used an updated survey questionnaire. Therefore some categories have changed in comparison with the previous report.

AGE DISAGGREGATION



NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS BY EEC



Marinka EEC

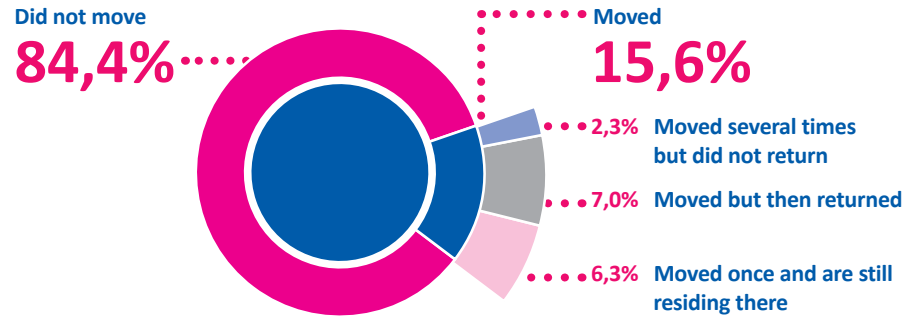
3 RESIDENCE, DISPLACEMENT AND RETURN

The predominant majority of respondents (90.3 per cent) indicated the NGCA as their place of residence prior to the conflict. It is noteworthy that 92.6 per cent of them stated that they were permanently residing in the NGCA at the time of the survey. Such figures show that GCA residents have far fewer reasons to travel across the line of contact than NGCA residents.

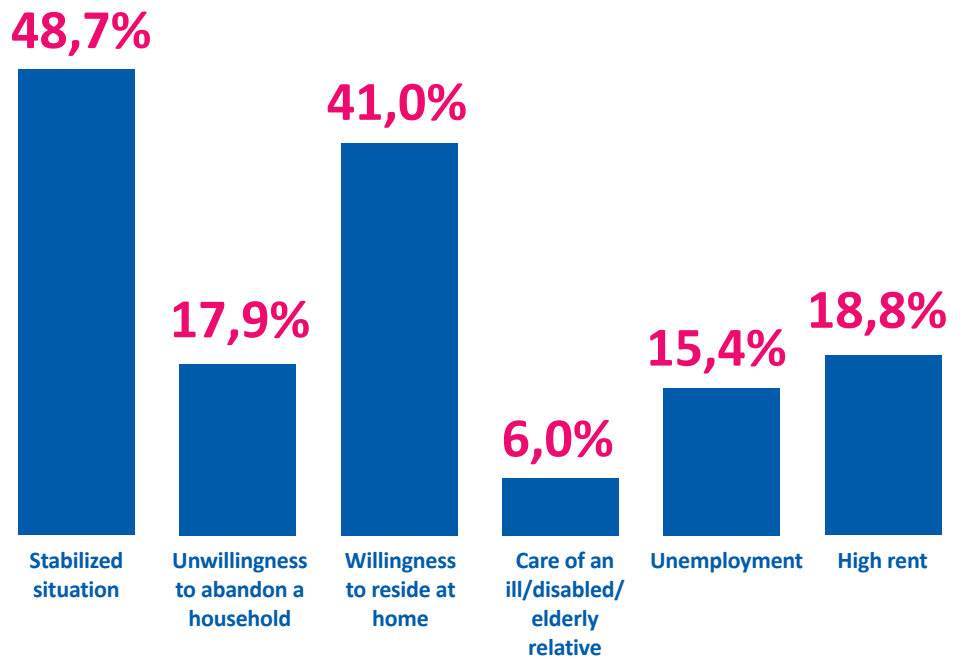
15.6 per cent of respondents stated that they had changed their place of residence due to the conflict in Eastern Ukraine at least once. Almost half of them (44.8 per cent) ultimately returned to their original place of residence².

Stabilization of the situation and desire to reside at home remain the most cited reasons for returning to one's place of origin³.

■ DISPLACEMENT



■ REASONS FOR RETURN

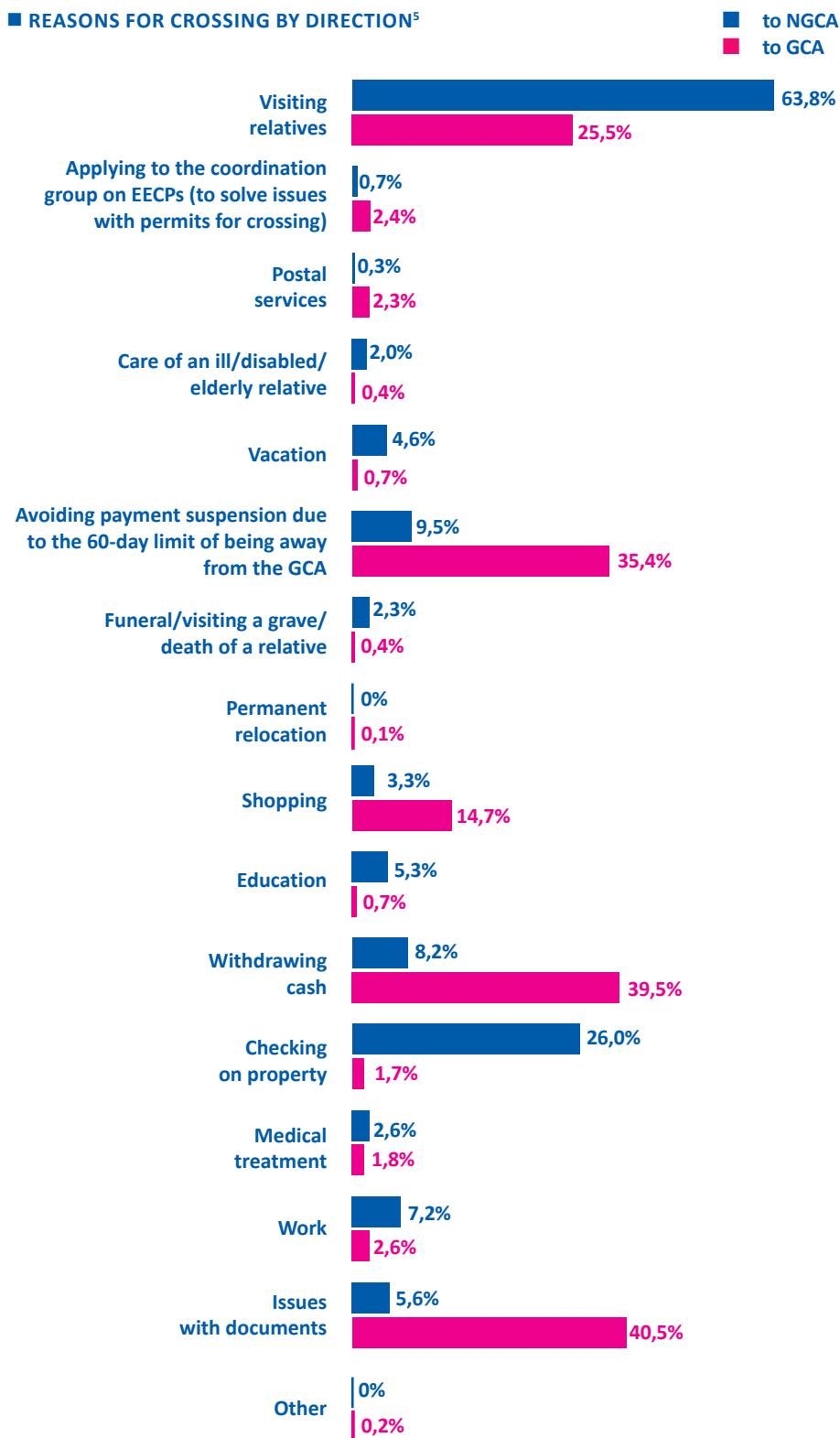


² As we have mentioned in the methodology section, it should be noted that the survey is not representative of the entire population crossing the checkpoints, but provides trends and tendencies concerning crossing the line of contact.

³ Respondents could provide several reasons

4 REASONS AND FREQUENCY

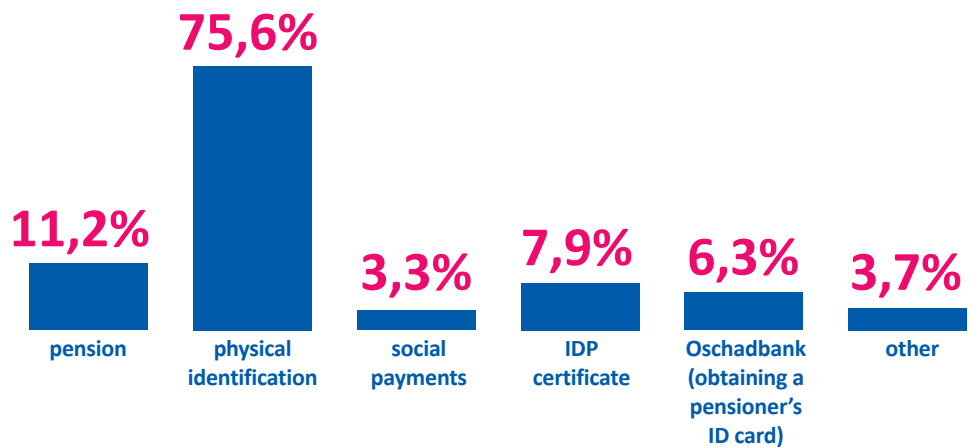
It is noteworthy that the majority of respondents (81.8 per cent) mentioned the GCA as the destination of their trip. The most common reasons⁴ for traveling to the GCA were solving issues with documents, withdrawing cash and avoiding payment suspension due to the 60-day limit of being away from the GCA, while the most common reason for going to the NGCA was visiting relatives, which is quite similar to the previous months.



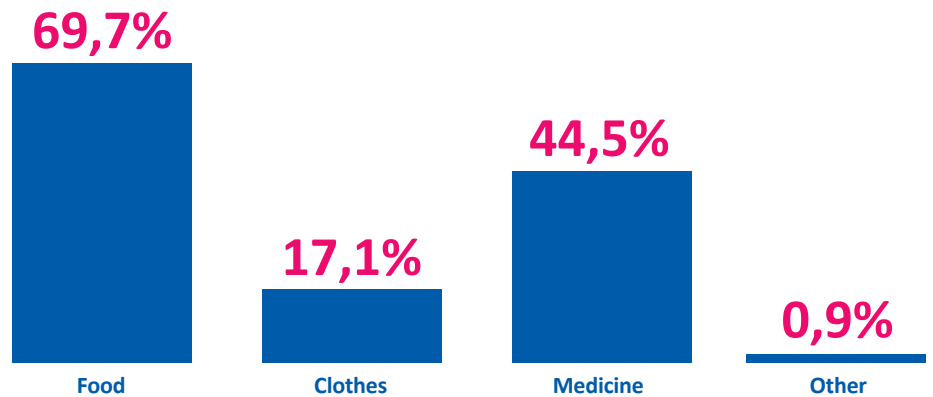
⁴ Respondents could mention several reasons

⁵ The percentage was calculated based on the total number of persons who indicated either the GCA or the NGCA as their destination.

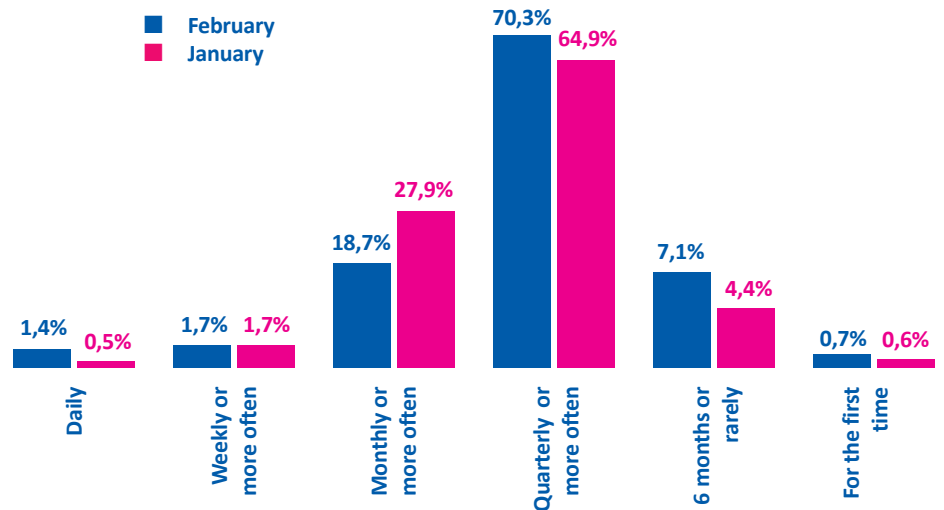
■ TYPE OF DOCUMENT ISSUE



■ TYPE OF GOODS PURCHASED



■ FREQUENCY OF CROSSING THE LINE OF CONTACT

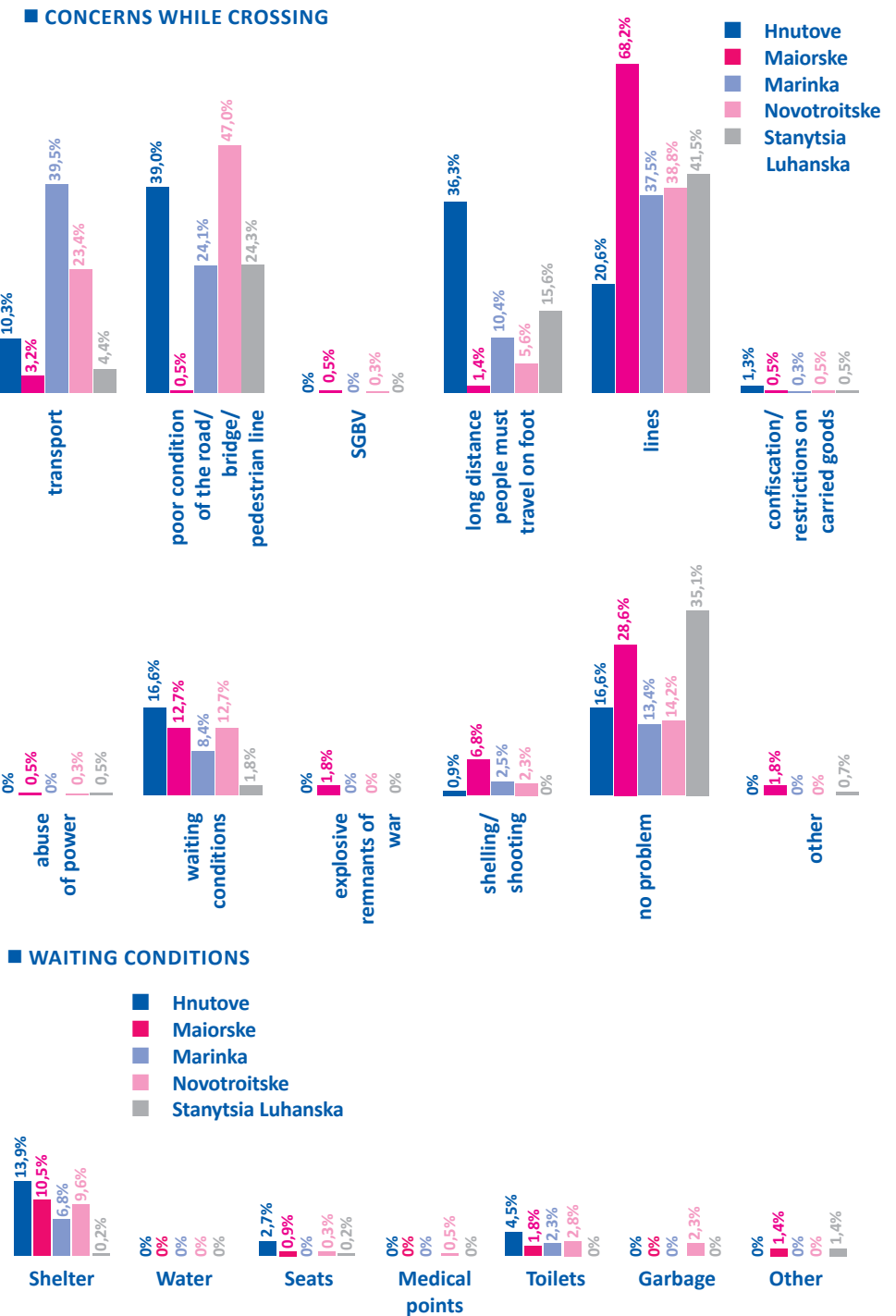


The majority of respondents (70.3 per cent) cross the line of contact quarterly or more. At the same time, the number of people crossing monthly or more has decreased from almost 30 per cent to 18.7, which can be related to bad weather. Taking into account the age disaggregation, such a ratio is most likely related to the requirements imposed by Ukrainian legislation for obtaining pensions and social benefits, such as verification of the actual place of residence and physical identification at Oschadbank.

5 CONCERNS WHILE CROSSING THE LINE OF CONTACT

Long lines remain the main issue of concern⁶ at the checkpoints. In particular, almost 70% of respondents identified long lines as a concern at Mayorske EECP. Most respondents at Novotroitske EECP complained about the poor condition of the pedestrian area, whereas transportation was flagged as the greatest concern at Marinka EECP.

Lack of shelter was the largest concern among those who complained about waiting conditions due to deteriorating weather.



⁶ Respondents could mention several concerns

6 INABILITY TO CROSS

Only 2.6 per cent of all respondents mentioned incidents of not being able to cross the line of contact in the past six months. Similar to previous months, long lines and database-related issues are reported as the most common reasons for not being able to cross the line of contact.

■ INABILITY TO CROSS (REASONS)

