

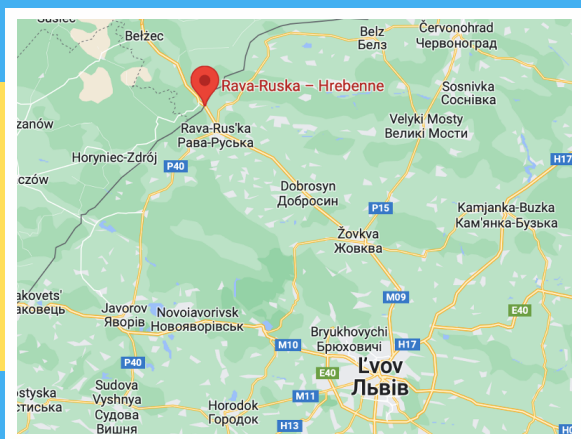


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HUMAN TRAFFICKING REPORT

Hrebenne Border Crossing



The Hrebenne border checkpoint is situated in the village of Hrebenne within Tomaszów Lubelski County in southeastern Poland. It lies on the border with Ukraine, approximately 22 kilometers (14mi) southeast of Tomaszów Lubelski and 129km (80mi) southeast of the regional capital Lublin.

Mid-March 2022

MOSFED staff first visited this border checkpoint in mid-March. At this time, approximately 300 refugees per day crossed on foot. The refugee movement on foot was very rare at night. Refugees who crossed the border in their own vehicles usually did not stop at the humanitarian centers.



10 humanitarian aid tents offering food, clothing, and medical care were set up in the area. Any volunteers deployed in Hrebenne had to first register in the humanitarian support center and wear yellow vests. Once registered, they were able to offer help to the incoming refugees who were directed to the "Mercy Hut" tent.



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Those seeking to leave were provided free transportation to one of the nearest refugee centers or to an airport or a train station to continue their journey. Transportation was carried out by public buses and personal vehicles belong to the volunteers.

To reduce the chance of human trafficking, uniformed police officers and registered volunteers kept a close watch over the entire process and did not allow strangers and unregistered volunteers to transport the refugees. 10 plain-clothed police officers were also observed monitoring the area. The work of volunteer organizations and police appeared well-coordinated.



MOSFED staff present in the area was also checked for their identification and questioned about the purpose of the stay. The staff was informed that any volunteers seeking to help transport the refugees to their chosen destination must first undergo a vetting and registration process. Upon return, the volunteers are required to report back and provide the exact address of the location where the refugee(s) were dropped off as well as the time. MOSFED staff aided several refugees and helped transport them to the airport in Lublin.



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The staff also encountered unidentified suspiciously looking males who were not recognized by the volunteer staff. These males were observed trying to approach the refugees in an effort to provide them with a ride to and accommodation in Germany. Police officers in place approached these males as soon as they were notified by one of the center's staff members and escorted them to the local police station for further follow-up. Following this incident, they were no longer observed at the border checkpoint area.



The flow of refugees across the border remained, for the most part, moderate for the rest of the month, with approximately 150 to 200 people crossing on foot. There was no change in the intensity of border crossings by car, with the numbers remaining low. On the other hand, the flow of freight transport entering Ukraine increased noticeably. It should be noted that over time, more people traveling in private vehicles bearing Ukrainian registration were observed entering Ukraine.



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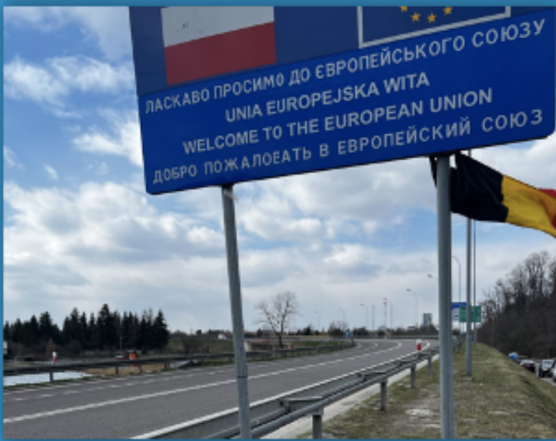
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End of March/Early April 2022

MOSFED staff did not observe any noticeable change in the intensity of border crossings by refugees on foot, with approximately 150 people crossing from Ukraine on average. The staff did, however, notice an increase in the number of busses from Ukraine, a possible indication that the transportation of refugees on the territory of Ukraine has become more organized. At the same time, there was a constant flow of trucks and private vehicles crossing the border towards Ukraine.



The first few days of April brought a significant decrease in border crossing in both directions (to and from Ukraine) in terms of both foot and vehicle traffic, with the humanitarian tents being empty.



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Hrebenne Border Crossing



Mid-April 2022

In the second week of April, the number of refugees crossing the border on foot from Ukraine was no more than 50 people per day. The reduction was also noticeable in the reduced staffing of humanitarian organizations that set up their stations in the area of the border crossing. There was a slight uptake in the number of people crossing the border towards Ukraine, with anywhere between 40 – 60 people crossing on any given day. Some of the “returnees” who were approached by the MOSFED staff stated that they were returning because they were tired and simply wanted to go home despite being aware of the dangers posed by the ongoing war. No suspicious activity was seen in the area of the border checkpoint.



Over time, the flow of traffic leaving Ukraine decreased just as the volume of transport vehicles entering Ukraine intensified. There continues to be a slight movement of people to cross the border towards Ukraine. There is also a constant flow of freight, private vehicles, and buses toward Ukraine.

