



CASH AND VOUCHER ASSISTANCE FOR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

Lithuanian Red Cross

CASE STUDY

Photo description: Lithuania Red Cross volunteer
Photo credit: Lithuanian Red Cross

Background

As part of the project Supporting the Integration of Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Displaced Persons in Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Romania funded by the Swiss Secretariat for Migration, Lithuanian Red Cross implemented a school supplies assistance programme to support families in vulnerable situations to ensure that children could begin the school year with necessary educational materials.

The programme targeted Ukrainian refugees, who have come to Lithuania after the start of the full-scale conflict in 2022 February 24. The assistance aimed to reduce financial pressure on families during the back-to-school period and promote equal access to education for children.

Who was Supported and How

The programme had three objectives

- 1- **Financial relief:** households received support to purchase school supplies and educational materials.
- 2- **Improved access to education:** to support children to be better prepared for participation in the academic year.
- 3- **Community support:** provide strengthened support networks for communities in vulnerable situations.

To be eligible for the participation in the programme households had to meet the following criteria:

1. arrived in Lithuania after 2022 February 24;
2. be residing in Lithuania;
3. have children aged 6 – 14 years old

Implementation was completed through several key steps.

- **Registration and validation of beneficiary lists:** Registration was organized in AccessRC. Individuals had to download the AccessRC app and register for the programme. Identification documents had to be uploaded and pictures confirming the identity. Communication with individuals about necessary additional information and rejected applications was done through AccessRC. LRC cleaned and removed duplications and created the final list of individuals receiving payment.
- **Cash Disbursement:** Payments were distributed as one-off sums, the value calculated EUR 50 per child in the household. Distribution was done through the RedRose platform, with which the LRC has a framework agreement with. The majority of payments were done by direct bank transfer, some people collected cash at designated MoneyGram locations.

Successes

Through the programme there were a number of successes.

- 1,321 individuals registered under the programme
- 513 households received support
- EUR 35,900 was transferred and collected successfully
- 97% of transfers were delivered directly to Lithuanian bank accounts

Challenges and Difficulties

The programme faced several challenges:

- The risk of delays in the distribution process can be examined in order to make the process more timely.
- The needs were higher than the capacity of the LRC to meet all requests.
- Feedback mechanisms can be improved and scaled to ensure direct feedback from children and adults and nimble adjustments to programme implementation.

Lessons Learned

1. While the AccessRC platform can be a tool that supports improved accessibility for people to request support, **AccessRC must be combined with in-person support to help apply for the programmes..** It is highly recommended that staff and volunteers involved at a branch level should be well versed in how AccessRC works and the challenges that can be faced when applying. Furthermore, programs should ensure that if people choose, they can apply for the program either in person or be supported via telephone to apply through the AccessRC platform on their behalf.
2. **Direct bank transfers are an effective and preferred delivery mechanism.** With 97% of payments transferred to bank accounts, this modality reduced administrative burden and enabled beneficiaries to access support quickly. The high uptake also suggests that bank transfers are the preferred method for most recipients.
3. **Back-to-school support is most effective when assistance is received before the start of the academic year.** The programme highlighted the importance of launching registration, verification, and payment processes sufficiently early to minimise delays and ensure households can purchase school supplies when they are most needed.