



Save the Children

CVA

TECHNICAL

NOTE

Lithuania

-February 2024-

CVA and Social Protection in Refugee settings: Key considerations for transfer values calculations

These technical notes have been developed for each country of the response and focuses on providing more details on key technical approaches used by response countries.

This specific factsheet focuses on considering poverty lines and social protection assistance when calculating transfer values for refugees. A detailed analysis of SCLT Cash for Protection Analysis is available here (link).

Save the Children Lithuania has been implementing a pilot project aiming at reducing child distress and violence in the home within 474 Ukrainian families who arrived in Lithuania after 24 February, 2022, including pregnant and lactating women and/or single headed households with children.

Program overview

Unconditional
-
Unrestricted

Total cash distributed Total beneficiaries Delivery mechanism


€385,850

To


474 HHs

Via


Bank transfers

1 one-off
cash transfer
270€ / HH3

December
2022


MPCA



Child protection



Nutrition

February
2023

Ongoing




TRANSFER VALUES

TRANSFER VALUE CALCULATION METHODOLOGY



Unlike other response countries, **no Cash Working Group was established in Lithuania**, and therefore no harmonized transfer values were provided to humanitarian responders. As such, SC Lithuania first conducted a series of consultations with other humanitarian organizations and the government and conducted an in-depth review of the government social protection system and assistance packages provided to refugees. An internal workshop was then conducted to finalize the methodology.

The transfer value calculation was based upon the methodology used in European countries to estimate the minimum costs of living – the absolute poverty line (governmental equivalent of minimum expenditure basket, using the below coefficient):

 1 household member = 1 = 327€	+	 Additional HH member > 14 y.o. = 0.5 = 163,5€	+	 Additional HH member < 14 y.o. = 0.3 = 98€
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As such, the minimum living costs per family varies depending on household composition.



SCLT also factored in the **inflation rate** at 22,4 %.



Social benefits received by refugees through the social protection scheme were also taken into consideration, namely:



As benefits did not reflect inflation and are also not reflective of the age used for the minimum cost of living categorization, SCLT added a **10% (or 32 Eur) top up** (of the minimum living costs) for each additional household member, to cover the additional costs associated to **winter** in recognitions of inflationary trends.



An additional nutrition **top-up of 20 euros** was provided to each **pregnant and lactating woman**.



The transfer value resulted in **Euro 180 + Euro 50 for each additional household member** (regardless of age), with the average allowance payment settling for 255 Euros / per month (for an average HH of 2,5 persons).

The assumption at design stage was that most beneficiaries would be newly/recently arrived, and therefore would benefit from free accommodation and utilities support assistance, in addition to free access to health care.

USING MONITORING DATA TO ADJUST TRANSFER VALUES:



Findings from post distribution monitoring suggest that while the intervention contributed to improving the economic situation of families and reducing child protection risks (one of the objectives of the project), the improvements on the economic front were relatively limited, which can be attributed to the transfer value being too low. For instance:



Basic Needs: The data shows an improvement at endline with 29% of households reporting being able to meet all or most of their basic needs compared to 11% at baseline. Rent/shelter remained the needs that household struggled the most to meet at endline alongside medical costs and childcare. At Endline stage, 49% of respondents reported still being unable to meet shelter needs.



Food Security: The average reduced coping strategy index score did not improve between baseline (10,26) and endline (11,32) and the data shows a higher proportion of household mostly in phase 2 (40,51% at baseline vs. 48,89% at endline) while the proportion of households in phase 3/4/5 remained pretty stable (20,25% at baseline vs. 21,46% at endline). The main reason why people had to resort to those strategies was reportedly to pay rent or access shelter both at baseline and endline, followed by the need to buy non-food items like clothes, small furniture and food.

As indicated in the above analysis, shelter costs appear as an important financial barrier, prior to but also after the provision of assistance. This could be partially linked to the assumptions made at design stage:



Access to free shelter: most households selected for the project ended up being households that had been in Lithuania for over six months and were therefore not necessarily accessing free accommodation anymore. Similarly, increases in prices of utilities costs (which were significant during this first winter after the conflict escalation in Ukraine) were not covered by the government assistance, hence further weighting on households' economies.



Access to free healthcare: access to emergency health services is free for refugees, however, only the employed, children, elderly and people with disabilities are entitled to free full healthcare system/services. Data from monitoring indicated that 90% of beneficiaries were unemployed, and even within the 10% employed, 16% were not receiving social benefits neither from the Ukrainian nor the Lithuania Governments.



The minimum poverty line was updated in December (in the middle of the implementation) and increased from 327 euros per person to 354. Therefore the value used (327euros) as a reference point was not reflective of the increases in consumer prices of 2022.

Based on this, SCLT decided to redesign their transfer value calculation methodology by adopting a tailored approach, reflective of each cases needs and capacities. For each new case, an in-depth interview is conducted to understand the family's financial situation, income sources, access to social protection assistance and needs.



As a reference point, basic guidance was developed for each target population profile, as described in the extract below, with a clear distinction made between newly arrived and settled populations:

TRANSFER VALUES CALCULATION

	Target beneficiaries	Timing	Duration of assistance provision	Arrival in Lithuania	Purpose
Cash for Protection (C4P)	HH's with CP or child rights violation risks – MPCA and/or C4P (eg. violence, threat of losing safe shelter/accommodation, inability to cover travelling expenses to reach basic & necessary (medical, legal, education, etc.) services, risk of family separation (incl. due to severe adult health conditions), loss of personal documents)	Any time in 2023 - 2024	Decided on individual basis	Any time after 24 February, 2022	Decided on individual basis
MULTI-PURPOSE CASH ASSISTANCE (MPCA)	Newly arriving HH's with children and pregnant women (irrespective of HH composition)	Any time in 2024	2 + 1 months <i>(situation of the HH is re-evaluated after 2 months)</i>	Up to 2 months before applying for assistance	To assure income to cover HH's basic needs during first months of arrival (covering the gap between Government/other NGOs assistance and MEB/ absolute poverty line)
	Single-headed HH's with children up to 3 years, with income less than the MEB/absolute poverty line	Any time in 2024	Long-term assistance: up to 12 months or until the child turns 3 <i>(paid for a period of three months after which the situation is re-evaluated)</i>	Any time after 24 February, 2022	To assure income to cover HH's basic needs (covering the gap between actual income and MEB/ absolute poverty line, until the adult caregiver enters labor market)

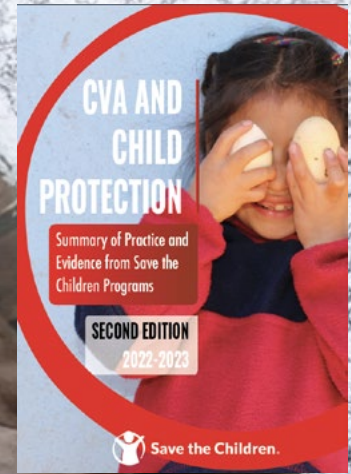
TOP-UP CALCULATION

Top ups were also designed to meet specific needs of certain families. In addition to the ones described below, other top ups include baby new arrival, back to school, health and winterization.

Standard top-ups to MPCA

Top-up/ programme type	Value	Who and when benefits	Assistance timing and duration	Arrival in Lithuania	Purpose
Pregnancy top-up	20 Eur / month	All pregnant women eligible for MPCA	As long as MPCA is provided (until birth of a baby)	As in case of MPCA	To cover increased nutritional needs during pregnancy
Shelter top-up	Amount paid by the beneficiary for accommodation that exceeds 17% of the MEB	when HH's income is less than MEB / absolute poverty rate and MPCA is provided when HH's income is not less than MEB / absolute poverty rate, yet amount paid for accommodation makes more than 17% of the MEB	As long as MPCA is provided	As in case of MPCA	To assist in covering high rent and utilities' costs

This technical factsheet needs to be read in complement of three following other documents:



The Save the Children Eastern Europe Capacity Statement (link) regroups key information, by country, on overall program design, reach and impact.

The 'Cash on the Move' (link) report provides an overall analysis and lessons learnt on the use of cash to assist populations on the move in the Ukraine response.

Save the Children's cross country research on CVA & CP, including the Lithuania specific case study (link).



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