



ESTONIAN  
REFUGEE  
COUNCIL



# 1000 DAYS

ESTONIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL'S HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE  
SINCE FEBRUARY 24, 2022

# SINCE FEBRUARY 24, 2022, ERC HAS BEEN PROVIDING MULTISECTORAL HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE



**439 107**  
individuals supported



**2 550 685 524 UAH**  
amount of aid provided  
**~ 56 995 413 EUR**

*\*All data is provided for the period February 24, 2022 – October 31, 2024*



Infosession within Emergency livelihoods, Zaporizhzhia region, March 2024



Distribution of food kits by ERC's local partner NGO "YES", Zaporizhzhia region, May 2024



In-person registration for multi-purpose cash assistance, Kharkiv region, April 2024



In 2022, Estonian Refugee Council was among the first humanitarian actors to respond to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. Thanks to the generosity of the Estonian public, our advanced digital tools, as well as our long-time presence in eastern parts of Ukraine, our teams on the ground were able to quickly scale up our work and assist others while being in a very precarious situation themselves. Now, 1000 days later, we remain and respond to the needs of people affected by the war, especially those living in the most hard-to-reach areas.

ERC Director  
Eero Janson



I want to take a moment to acknowledge our extraordinary team members who do this work day in and day out. We work extensively with IDPs, while 33% of our staff are also displaced from cities on the frontline or areas currently under occupation. We work on women's economic empowerment, while powerful women make up 56% of our team. We work entirely with conflict-affected people and people facing terrible blackouts and heating shortages. Our team does this work after sleepless nights of air raids and attacks, from basements, during blackouts. Not only are they resilient, but also funny, clever, brave and tenacious despite the last 1000 days.

ERC Ukraine Country Director  
Jessica Carlson

**The Estonian Refugee Council (ERC)** is a rights-based humanitarian organisation. Established in 2000, the Estonian Refugee Council has grown to become the largest humanitarian organisation in the Baltics. ERC works and has presence in six countries: Armenia, Estonia, Georgia, Jordan, Lebanon, and Ukraine.

ERC's goal in Ukraine is to provide timely, effective, and needs-based assistance to the internally displaced and conflict-affected people of Ukraine, including some of the most hard-to-reach areas.

ERC offers both multi-purpose cash assistance, which is intended to alleviate basic needs, and cash-based aid with a specific orientation, such as livelihood activities, livestock winterisation, heating and utilities. In addition, ERC supports women in regaining their livelihoods through entrepreneurship, providing workshops and peer-to-peer learning, followed by asset-based grants and a mentoring programme for the top participants.

# HOW ERC STARTED HUMANITARIAN WORK IN UKRAINE

ERC has been supporting people affected by the war in Ukraine since 2014, adapting its approach according to the evolving situation and people's needs. Following the start of the full-scale invasion, ERC rapidly scaled up its geographical and sectoral programming scope to address the most urgent needs of crisis-affected people.

## 2022

- February 24** The “For Ukraine!” fundraising campaign was re-launched in Estonia. A total of 5,79 million EUR was gathered as private and corporate donations in 2022. Thanks to Estonian public fundraising, ERC’s early emergency response was prompt and flexible.
- February 25** ERC started need-based evacuations from the Ukrainian-Polish border to Estonia. In total, ERC evacuated more than 8 000 Ukrainian refugees, nearly 40% of them being children.
- March 2** ERC started to provide multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) to people affected by the armed conflict in Ukraine. The first cash assistance payments to 35 households were done that day.
- April** ERC extended its cash assistance programme with funding from the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund managed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).
- May** Online application platform for multi-purpose cash assistance in Ukraine was launched.
- By the end of the month, ERC had reached more than 100 000 individuals with multi-purpose cash assistance.

- June** The Food Security Programme was launched for de-occupied areas where markets were not yet operational.
- July** ERC received official accreditation from the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine to work in Ukraine as an international humanitarian organisation.  
The Empowering Women Entrepreneurship Programme was relaunched to support women in recovering their livelihoods through entrepreneurship.
- August** ERC started cooperation with the French humanitarian organisation Acted, funded by the European Union.
- December** By the end of the year ERC's humanitarian response in Ukraine had expanded to four main directions: multi-purpose cash assistance programme, food security programme, women's entrepreneurship programme, and winterisation assistance programme.

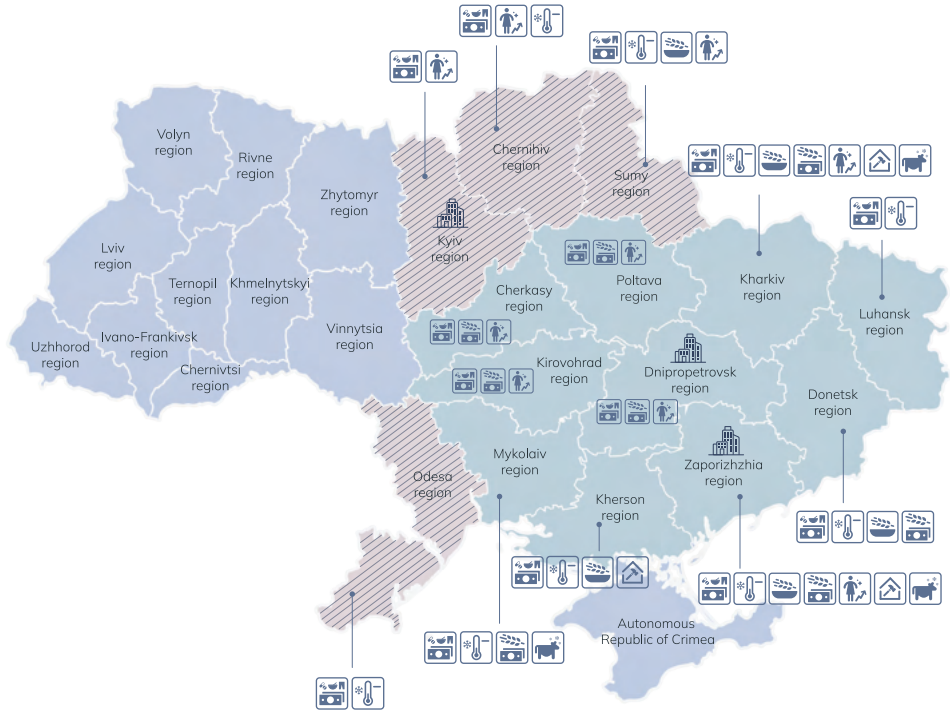
## 2023


- August** ERC launched the Emergency Livelihoods Programme aimed at helping conflict-affected families start or resume economic activities to enhance their livelihoods.  
ERC started to provide support for light and medium repairs of damaged housing.
- September** ERC joined the Ukraine Response Consortium, led by Acted and funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA).


## 2024

ERC supports war-affected people in 10 regions across Ukraine implementing emergency response and economic recovery programmes. ERC has more than 70 employees and three offices – in Kyiv, Dnipro, and Zaporizhzhia.

# UKRAINE PROGRAMME AREAS



 ERC's current areas of operation (2024)

 ERC's previous coverage areas (2022-2023)



Multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA)



Cash for heating



Emergency livelihoods



Food security



Empowering women business grants



Shelter



Winterisation livelihoods support for livestock

# KYIV REGION



**28 005**

individuals supported



**184 229 222 UAH**

amount of aid provided

~ 4 613 749 EUR



February 2022 – December 2023



Multi-purpose  
cash assistance

**27 987**

individuals



Empowering women  
business grants

**18** asset-based  
grants

# CHERNIHIV REGION



**21 607**

individuals supported



**142 514 017 UAH**

amount of aid provided

**~ 3 569 053 EUR**



February 2022 – December 2023



Multi-purpose  
cash assistance

**21 190**

individuals



Empowering women  
business grants

**5** asset-based  
grants



Cash for heating

**412**

individuals



# SUMY REGION



**27 819**

individuals supported



**168 877 450 UAH**

amount of aid provided

~ 4 229 286 EUR



February 2022 – December 2023



Multi-purpose  
cash assistance

**24 604**

individuals



Empowering women  
business grants

**4** asset-based  
grants



Cash for heating

**710**

individuals

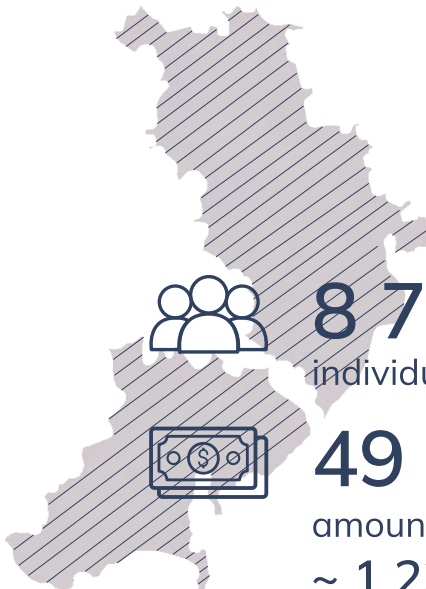


Food security

**2 501**

individuals

# ODESA REGION



**8 738**

individuals supported



**49 271 180 UAH**

amount of aid provided

~ 1 233 924 EUR



August 2022 – December 2023



Multi-purpose  
cash assistance

**7 761**  
individuals



Cash for heating

**977**  
individuals

# MYKOLAIV REGION



**12 129**

individuals supported



**85 198 189 UAH**

amount of aid provided

~ 1 903 765 EUR



May 2022 – ongoing



Multi-purpose  
cash assistance

**9 165**  
individuals



Cash for heating

**2 033**  
individuals



Emergency  
livelihoods

**516**  
individuals

# KHERSON REGION



**56 462**

individuals supported



**418 845 344 UAH**

amount of aid provided

**~ 9 359 155 EUR**



May 2022 – ongoing



Multi-purpose  
cash assistance

**43 441**

individuals



Cash for heating

**9 338**

individuals



Food security

**3 627**

individuals



Shelter

**86**

individuals

# KHARKIV REGION



**60 388**

individuals supported



**357 376 823 UAH**

amount of aid provided

~ 7 985 633 EUR



April 2022 – ongoing



Multi-purpose  
cash assistance

**42 402**  
individuals



Empowering women  
business grants

**3** asset-based  
grants



Cash for heating

**4 953**  
individuals



Emergency  
livelihoods

**429**  
individuals



Food security

**11 892**  
individuals



Shelter

**320**  
individuals

# DNIPRO REGION



**7 282**

individuals supported



**43 412 794 UAH**

amount of aid provided

**~ 970 064 EUR**



February 2022 – ongoing



Multi-purpose  
cash assistance

**7 246**  
individuals



Empowering women  
business grants

**18** asset-based  
grants



Emergency  
livelihoods

**18**  
individuals

# ZAPORIZHZHIA REGION



**84 941**

individuals supported



**516 607 529 UAH**

amount of aid provided

~ **11 543 665 EUR**



February 2022 – ongoing



Multi-purpose  
cash assistance

**55 593**

individuals



Empowering women  
business grants

**14** asset-based  
grants



Cash for heating

**7 946**

individuals



Emergency  
livelihoods

**396**

individuals



Food security

**20 609**

individuals



Shelter

**77**

individuals

# DONETSK REGION



**41 117**

individuals supported



**208 644 872 UAH**

amount of aid provided

~ 4 662 197 EUR



February 2022 – ongoing



Multi-purpose  
cash assistance

**23 402**  
individuals



Cash for heating

**3 632**  
individuals



Food security

**13 976**  
individuals



Emergency  
livelihoods

**30**  
individuals



# LUHANSK REGION



**17 608**

individuals supported



**150 507 880 UAH**

amount of aid provided

**~ 3 363 118 EUR**



February 2022 – ongoing



Multi-purpose  
cash assistance

**15 952**

individuals



Cash for heating

**1 656**

individuals

# POLTAVA REGION



**5 675**

individuals supported



**44 641 348 UAH**

amount of aid provided

**~ 997 516 EUR**



February 2022 – ongoing



Multi-purpose  
cash assistance

**5 009**

individuals



Emergency  
livelihoods

**595**

individuals



Empowering women  
business grants

**71**

asset-based  
grants

# KIROVOHRAD REGION



**2 378**

individuals supported



**19 411 413 UAH**

amount of aid provided

~ **433 750 EUR**



February 2022 – ongoing



Multi-purpose  
cash assistance

**2 076**  
individuals



Emergency  
livelihoods

**274**  
individuals



Empowering women  
business grants

**28** asset-based  
grants

# CHERKASY REGION



**3 978**

individuals supported



**27 073 538 UAH**

amount of aid provided

**~ 604 961 EUR**



February 2022 – ongoing



Multi-purpose  
cash assistance

**3 644**  
individuals



Emergency  
livelihoods

**311**  
individuals



Empowering women  
business grants

**23** asset-based  
grants





# MULTI-PURPOSE CASH ASSISTANCE (MPCA)

On March 2, 2022, ERC provided the first cash assistance payments to 35 households affected by the conflict. Since then, ERC has quickly become one of the largest MPCA actors in Ukraine.

To date, ERC has supported over **296 036** people in eastern, southern, central, and northern regions of Ukraine with multi-purpose cash assistance totaling **2 208 009 620 UAH (~ 49 338 273 EUR)**.

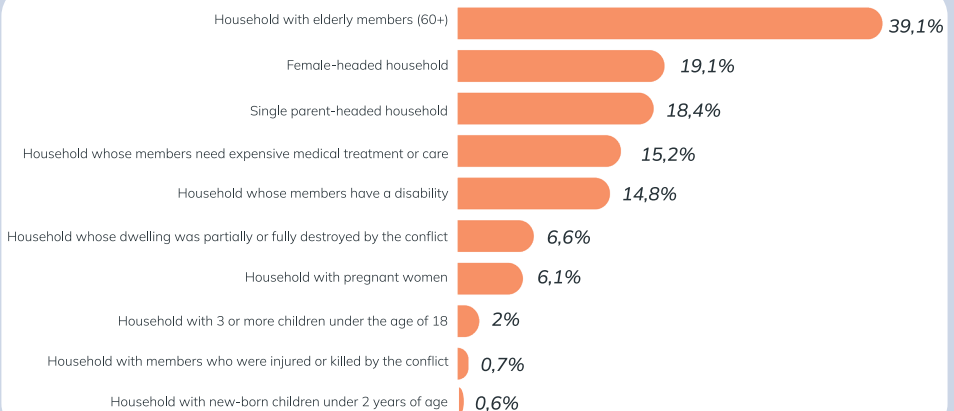
ERC is targeting IDPs, returnees, and non-displaced conflict-affected populations belonging to socio-economic vulnerable groups. As part of its emergency humanitarian response, ERC also delivers cash assistance to households directly impacted by missile strikes, shelling, and mandatory evacuation orders in areas with intensified hostilities.



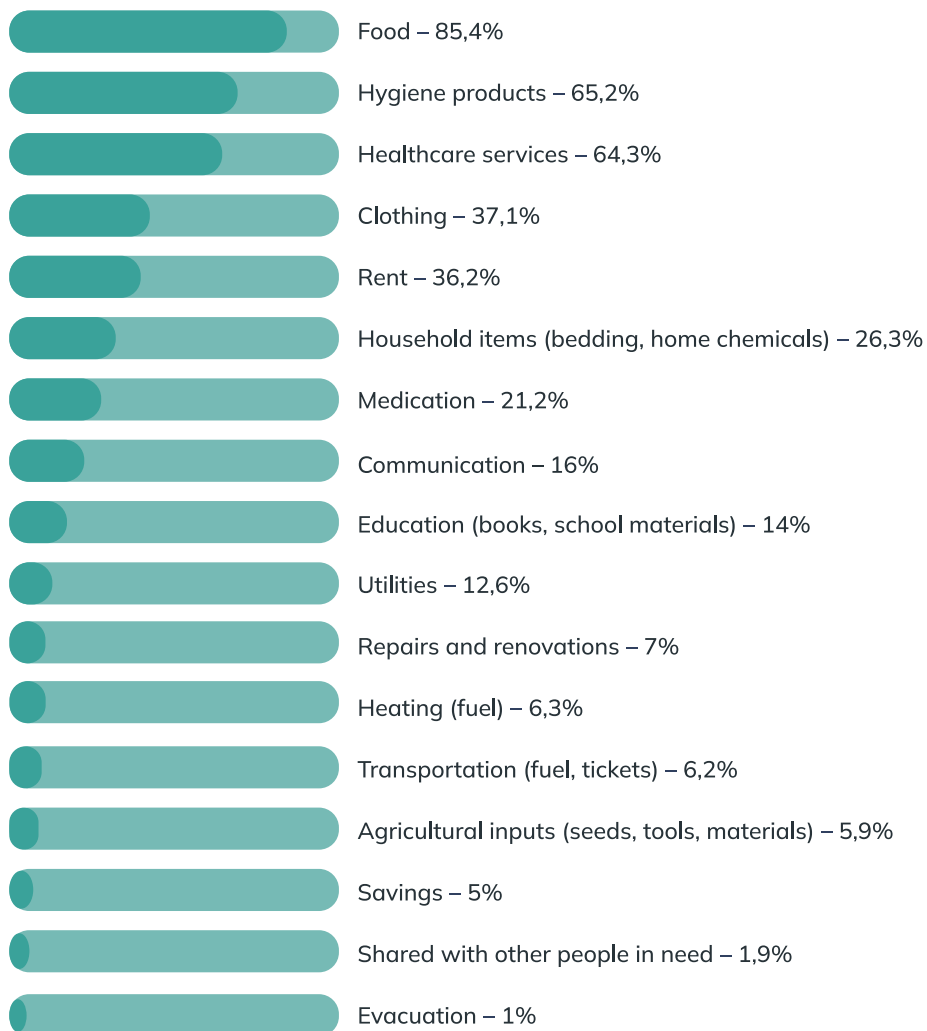
\*Map of regions where MPCA was and is provided

Currently ERC's focus is on those in need in the hard-to-reach and front-line areas of Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk, Luhansk, and Kherson regions.

## ERC IS TARGETING SOCIOECONOMICALLY VULNERABLE PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THE WAR



## THE RECEIVED MULTI-PURPOSE CASH ASSISTANCE WAS SPENT ON:



\* Results collected via ERC's Post Distribution Monitoring surveys

## CASH ASSISTANCE EMPOWERS PEOPLE TO MAKE CHOICES BASED ON THEIR NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

\*\*\*

79-year-old pensioner Lidiia lives in Zaporizhzhia region less than 50 km from the frontline in Zaporizhzhia. Since the full-scale invasion, this region has come under heavy bombardment which has made the situation in her community very difficult. Lidiia's pension is not enough to fully cover her needs, especially medicine and household repairs. To make ends meet, Lidiia was forced to cut back on purchasing food and medicines.

After learning about ERC's MPCA programme, Lidiia's daughter-in-law helped her to register for assistance. She was able to receive cash assistance and address some of her household repair and health concerns.



*Post Distribution Monitoring, Zaporizhzhia region, February 2024*

\*\*\*

Oksana, a paramedic, worked for more than 20 years saving lives in Donetsk region. Since the first days of the invasion, Donetsk region saw some of the worst devastation and to this day remains an area of heavy fighting and extreme concern. Consequently, Oksana and her family were forced to flee to Chernihiv region. Unfortunately, even in Chernihiv region she was not safe and was injured by nearby shelling. Fragments from a projectile were not able to be removed, her facial nerves were damaged, and she needed to relearn how to speak. Oksana explained that the financial assistance from ERC allowed her to cover some of her family's basic needs while she recovered.



*Infosession within Emergency livelihoods programme,  
Zaporizhzhia region, October 2024*





# EMERGENCY LIVELIHOODS

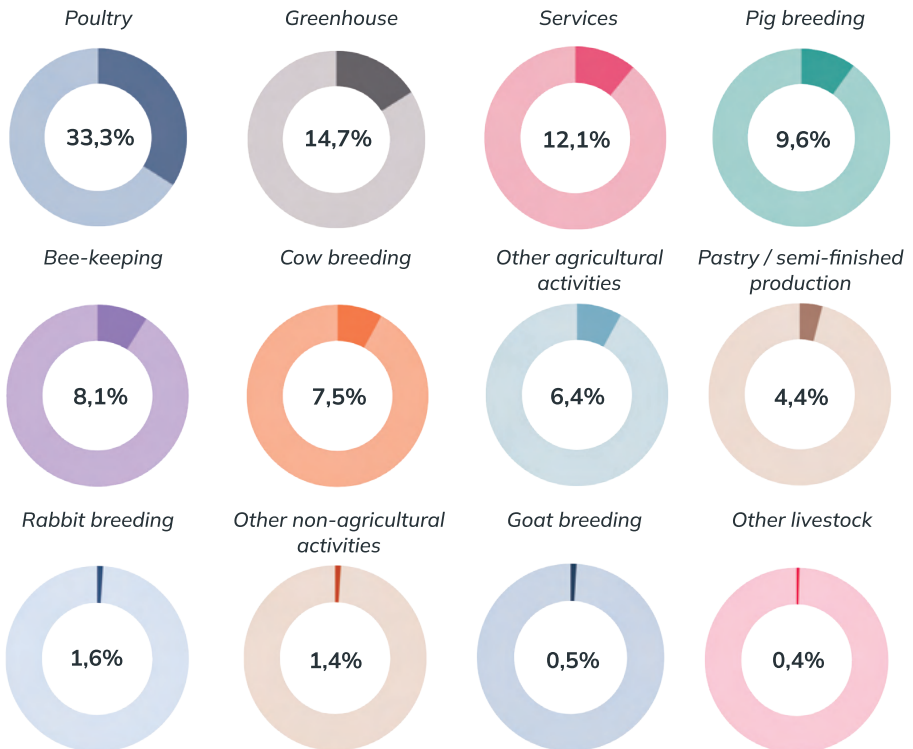
ERC has supported **882** vulnerable families affected by the armed conflict in Cherkasy, Kirovohrad, Poltava, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Mykolaiv, and Donetsk regions with a total amount **24 884 498 UAH (~ 556 047 EUR)**.

Through an Emergency livelihoods programme, people who have lost their primary means of income receive an opportunity to start or resume economic activities to provide for their families.



\*Map of regions where Emergency livelihoods is provided

## TYPES OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED



# ERC PROVIDES VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS WITH LIVELIHOODS SUPPORT: MYKHAILO'S HOME DAIRY FARM IN POLTAVA REGION



Mykhailo Semesenko, September 2024

Mykhailo lives with his wife on the outskirts of Myrhorod town in the Poltava region. His family has been keeping cows for over 30 years. They started with one cow to have milk for themselves. Then they got more cows and delivered milk to the dairy. After losing their main job, keeping and breeding cows became the main source of income for the couple. The husband and wife take care of their herd while selling milk, sour milk, sour cream, and fermented baked milk (ryazhanka) in their local market.

*“Home dairy farming is our family’s life business. It is difficult and expensive to keep cows, many people give cows, many people sell cows for slaughter nowadays, but we are not one of those people. We have established a production process and have had regular customers for many years,”* Mykhailo says.

Income from farming previously covered less than half of the family's basic needs, meanwhile the demand for their products was growing. Mykhailo saw an opportunity to expand his business but lacked the resources to do so. Mykhailo applied for the Estonian Refugee Council's Emergency Livelihoods programme, which provides livelihood grants to vulnerable households and individuals who have lost their primary means of income. These grants allow recipients to rebuild or expand their livelihoods, regain self-sufficiency, and stabilize their economic situation. After ERC's thorough evaluation and verification, Mykhailo received 36,000 UAH to purchase a young dairy cow. This made it possible to increase milk yield and the number of dairy products for sale. As a result, with the funds received from selling his own products, Mykhailo was able to prepare fodder for cows and calves for the winter season, and obtain additional income for his family.





# EMPOWERING WOMEN BUSINESS GRANTS

Since February 24, 2022, ERC has supported **184** women-led micro- and small businesses in Sumy, Chernihiv, Kyiv, Kharkiv, Dnipro, Zaporizhzhia, Poltava, Cherkasy, and Kirovohrad regions.

**104** women with new business ideas and **80** already existing female business founders received asset-based grants worth **19 168 040 UAH (~ 428 312 EUR)**, together with mentoring for six months.

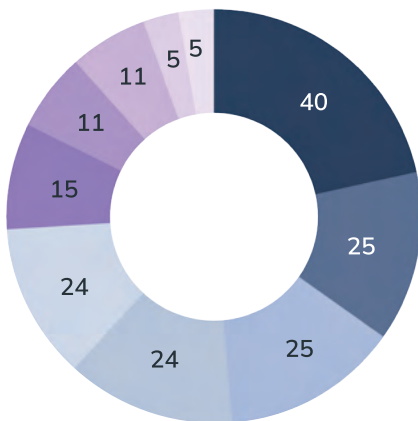
By launching micro- and family businesses that provide jobs and services, women have the potential to improve their independent and sustainable livelihoods, as well as the national economy on a grassroots level.

Currently, ERC's focus is on women in Cherkasy, Kirovohrad, and Poltava regions.



\*Map of regions where Empowering Women business grants were  and are  provided

## BUSINESS SECTORS SUPPORTED



- food production
- sewing clothes and textile products
- educational services
- other
- wellness and beauty
- arts, crafts and handmade products
- agriculture and farming
- food serving / catering
- retail
- recreational / entertainment services

# A JOURNEY OF RESILIENCE: LIUDMYLA'S STORY OF CRAFTING SUCCESS IN THE FACE OF WAR

Liudmyla had to abandon her hometown of Sloviansk twice – first in 2014 and again in 2022 – when the full-scale invasion of Ukraine began. With the war and personal hardships, she found herself at a crossroads, facing a difficult decision about her future.

When Liudmyla discovered the craft of cheese making, it became her passion. By early 2022, she had built a thriving business, preparing for the March 8th holiday with a large stock of soft, blue, and hard cheeses. “Although there was talk of a full-scale war, I didn't believe it... I kept preparing for the holiday,” she recalls. But on February 24, her worst fears were realised.



*Liudmyla, craft cheese producer*

Forced to flee, she left everything behind – including her carefully prepared cheeses, which spoiled when the refrigerators lost power. “There were a lot of losses,” she remembers.



Liudmyla and her family eventually settled in Poltava region. An entrepreneur at heart, she knew that returning to work was essential. With orders growing, Liudmyla realised she needed to scale up. Her breakthrough came when she was awarded 180 000 UAH from the Estonian Refugee Council in Ukraine. With these funds, she purchased essential equipment, including a cheese-ripening refrigerator, a cheese pickling bath, and a 50-litre cheese-making machine.

“I am grateful for this support every day,” says Liudmyla. “Most of my equipment was left behind in Sloviansk, and I wouldn't have been able to afford this on my own. This kind of assistance is vital during the war – it lifts the burden we're forced to bear and reignites our will to live”.

Today, Liudmyla lives in Sokolova Balka, Poltava region, where she continues to make cheese. She has expanded her production, renting another apartment to house her equipment and converting it into her workshop. Most of her sales are conducted online through Instagram, where she continues to share her passion for craft cheese with customers across Ukraine.



## WINTERISATION LIVELIHOODS SUPPORT FOR LIVESTOCK

The objective of the Programme is to increase food security and self-sufficiency of vulnerable people and communities affected by the war by protecting and restoring their food and livelihood production (protecting livestock and poultry so they can survive the winter).

429 families were provided support to meet their immediate basic agricultural needs for the 2023-2024 winter season in Zaporizhzhia, Mykolaiv, and Kharkiv regions. Value of winterisation livelihoods support for livestock provided: **9 919 476 UAH ( ~ 221 652 EUR)**.

For the 2024-2025 winter season, submission of applications is ongoing.



*\*Map of regions where winterisation livelihoods support for livestock is provided*

*Zaporizhzhia region, January 2024*





## CASH FOR HEATING

ERC has supported **12 234** conflict-affected families living in rural and peri-urban areas who are facing difficulties to cover their winter heating needs in Kyiv, Chernihiv, Sumy, Odesa, Mykolaiv, Kherson, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk, and Luhansk regions.

ERC has provided cash for heating assistance for the purchase of solid fuels such as coal, firewood, briquettes, or pellets or for the payment for heating utilities.



\*Map of regions where cash for heating was provided and is provided

### “I REALIZED THAT I DO NOT HAVE A HOME ANYMORE,” HOW LIUDMYLA SURVIVES UNDER THE CONSTANT THREAT OF SHELLING

Liudmyla is a resident of Iziurm district in Kharkiv region, an area that was liberated in 2022 and continues to be under shelling and missile strikes. When the full-scale invasion started, Liudmyla was in Kharkiv for treatment. She wanted to come back home immediately, but the bridges had already been blown up. Later, she found out that her house was ruined. “I realized that I do not have a home anymore,” Liudmyla says.



Liudmyla in front of her ruined home, April 2024

As soon as the village was de-occupied, Liudmyla returned home. There was no roof and the basement was leaking in her house. Despite that, Liudmyla still lived in the basement during the first winter. There was no electricity, and together with neighbors, she cut down all the gardens for firewood. Due to the ongoing hostilities, Liudmyla’s house has become uninhabitable. The woman had to leave her home and stay at her neighbors.


After the attack, Liudmyla had received cash for heating assistance from the Estonian Refugee Council to address her most urgent needs for the upcoming winter.



## FOOD SECURITY

Since February 24, 2022, ERC and its partner NGOs YES, GoodWill, RescueNow, Onuky, and volunteer group Kyiv Volunteers has provided food assistance to **52 619** individuals in rural and hard-to-reach areas of Kherson, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, and Donetsk regions, totaling **53 946 890 UAH** ( ~ 1 243 810 EUR).



 \*Map of regions where Food security has been implemented



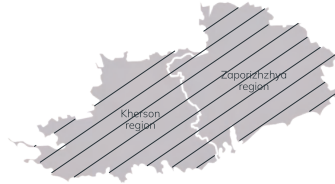
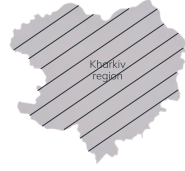
*Distribution of food kits by ERC's local partner NGO "YES", Zaporizhzhia region, May 2024*





# SHELTER

In 2023-2024, ERC provided support to **202** vulnerable households for light and medium repairs of damaged housing in Kherson, Kharkiv, and Zaporizhzhia regions, totaling **11 362 500 UAH ( ~ 253 896 EUR)**.



 \*Map of regions where Shelter has been implemented



Viktor's house was damaged in the summer of 2022 due to shelling in the Kherson region. At that time, the man with his family was forced to leave the village due to the temporary occupation. When the village was de-occupied seven months later, the family returned to rebuild their home and their lives. With financial assistance from the Estonian Refugee Council, Viktor was able to completely repair the roof and replace the broken front door and windows.

Pavlo and his family were forced to evacuate to Poltava when active hostilities broke out in their village in the Kharkiv region. In a meantime, his house was seriously damaged. Despite the difficulties and dangers, the family decided to return home after the de-occupation. Thanks to the funds provided by ERC, Pavlo received an opportunity to partially repair the internal walls and ceiling, rebuild the roof, and replace doors and windows. Thus, this became a chance to start anew in their native land.





*Infosession within Emergency livelihoods programme, Kharkiv region, August 2024*

# ERC'S ONGOING HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

## MULTI-PURPOSE CASH ASSISTANCE

The programme is currently supported by the European Union, USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) as part of the Ukraine Response Consortium, the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund (UHF) managed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia. Acted is the lead partner for EU and BHA projects.

## EMERGENCY LIVELIHOODS

The programme is currently funded the European Union, USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) as part of the Ukraine Response Consortium Consortium, led by Acted, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia.

## EMPOWERING WOMEN BUSINESS GRANTS

The programme is implemented as part of the Ukrainian Response Consortium, led by Acted, and funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA).

## CASH FOR HEATING

The programme is currently supported by the European Union, USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) as part of the Ukraine Response Consortium, the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund (UHF) managed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia. Acted is the lead partner for EU and BHA projects.

## WINTERISATION LIVELIHOODS SUPPORT FOR LIVESTOCK

The programme is currently funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia.



Rapid MPCA registration,  
Kharkiv region, October 2024

# CONTACT INFORMATION

## ERC website and socials



## For feedback and appeals:

✉ [erc-hotline-ua@pagulasabi.ee](mailto:erc-hotline-ua@pagulasabi.ee)

☎ 073 861 79 98

📄 [online feedback form](#)

[register.pagulasabi.ee/uk/feedback](https://register.pagulasabi.ee/uk/feedback)



ERC's programmes in Ukraine are currently implemented with the generous support of donors and partners, including the EU, USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA), the Ukraine Humanitarian Fund managed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), and the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## CURRENT DONORS AND PARTNERS



## PREVIOUS DONORS AND PARTNERS

