



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Refugee Council of Lithuania
(Pabėgėlių Taryba)



Introducing the Refugee Council of Lithuania

Founded in 2021 with the support of the **United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR)**, the Refugee Council of Lithuania (RCL) has emerged from a collective effort to address the under-representation of refugees in Lithuania's integration measures and policies.

Since then, the organization has been steadfast in its commitment of amplifying the voices of refugees, empowering them through innovative projects, representation, and dialogue, and advocating for their rights and wellbeing.

Values

At the heart of our organization lie our core values of **co-creation, equality, transparency, inclusion and diversity.**



Mission

As a refugee-led organization, our mission is to **empower** refugees through **innovative projects, representation, and dialogue, fostering their integration**, contribution to the society and participation in **decision-making.**

Our **Impact**

Developing Skills:

64.7% of refugee entrepreneurs improved their Lithuanian, while **58.8%** enhanced their entrepreneurial skills.

Putting Skills into Action:

58.8% applied new marketing knowledge, while **35.3%** improved tax declarations, highlighting practical training integration.

Driving Business Success:

RCL's training contributed to business growth, with **70.6%** gaining more customers and **23.5%** earning more revenue.

Strengthening Connections:

94.1% built new friendships with fellow entrepreneurs, and **58.8%** gained insights from others, fostering stronger community ties.





Svitlana's Story

Svitlana Stepanenko, a Ukrainian entrepreneur, has been living in Lithuania for over two years. The idea of founding a bookstore came to Svitlana when she faced challenges raising her son and struggled to find Ukrainian children's literature. She decided to launch Svitlobook (Svitlana and Books), an online bookstore that caters Ukrainian children's books to a wider audience.

I attended seminars, practical lectures, and events organized RCL. With the knowledge and practical skills I gained, I decided to start my own online bookstore.

Svitlana took part in language courses and other training offered by RCL. "RCL helped me overcome my fear of using social media, connect with like-minded people, expand my network, and gain valuable business management skills."

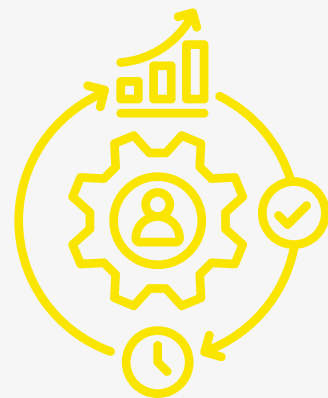
Today, Svitlana celebrates her success!

In Lithuania, she collaborates with a Ukrainian school and a store featuring Ukrainian products, where her books are proudly displayed.

Our **Activities**

RESEARCH & PARTNERSHIPS

- Refugee needs assessment
- Business financing ecosystem analysis
- Partnership development to support refugee entrepreneurs
- Awareness campaigns and guidelines for refugee business grants



ENTREPRENEURSHIP & CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMS

- Trainings on entrepreneurship, digital skills, cybersecurity, and business fundraising
- Lithuanian language courses



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & ADVOCACY INITIATIVES

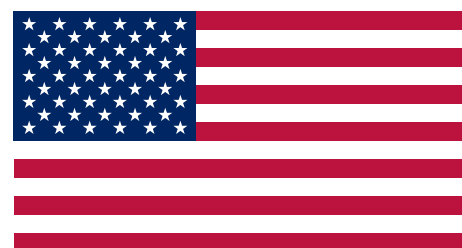
- Networking events for refugees entrepreneurs and NGOs
- Storytelling workshops



Our Donors

In 2024, RCL achieved significant milestones in empowering refugees on their path toward independence and integration in Lithuania.

This was made possible with the support from our esteemed donors, including UNHCR, the U.S. Embassy in Vilnius, the Nordic Council of Ministers, the European Union, the Open Lithuania Foundation, and various private and individual contributors.



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



**Nordic Council of Ministers
Office in Lithuania**

Our **Projects**

Capacity Building and Partnerships between Baltic and Nordic States (Jan - Apr 2024)

This initiative sought to strengthen refugee-led organizations in Lithuania and Latvia through strategic partnerships and knowledge exchange with Nordic counterparts. The project was funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers under the Grant Program for Nordic-Baltic Non-Governmental Organizations.



Bridging the Financial Gap Project (Sep - Dec 2024)

This project focused on overcoming the challenges that refugee entrepreneurs faced when seeking financial support for their businesses, particularly grants. This project was funded by The Open Lithuania Foundation.



Our **Projects**

Building Entrepreneurial and Digital Skills for Ukrainian Refugees (Throughout 2024)

The project supported Ukrainian refugees in achieving economic independence and sustainably integrating into Lithuanian society. Workshops, language courses, and networking events equipped them with entrepreneurial and digital skills for self-employment or business creation. The project was funded by the U.S Embassy in Vilnius.



Our **Projects**

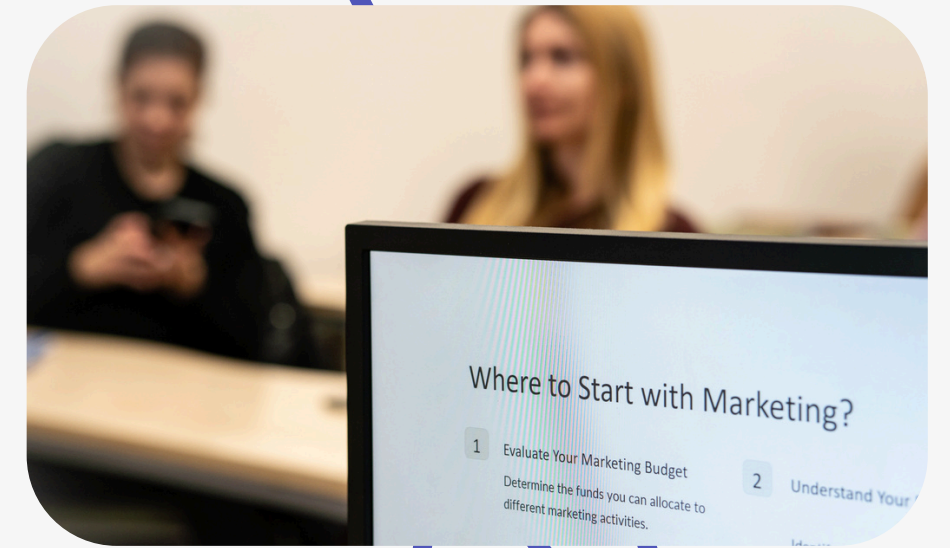
The Voices of Strength: Refugee Empowerment through Storytelling and Advocacy (Jul - Dec 2024)

This project aimed to inspire and uplift refugees by equipping them with the tools and skills necessary to share their personal stories effectively, fostering a deeper understanding of EU values and strengthening the voices of refugee communities. The project was funded by the EU through the Open Lithuania Foundation.



Bridging Refugees, Experts, and Local Communities (Aug - Dec 2024)

The project sought to establish dialogue among refugees, community leaders, and local authorities to boost organizational capacities in fundraising and strategic development. A bi-annual newsletter featuring refugees' concerns, aspirations, and personal experiences was also published. The project was funded by UNHCR.



Our **Achievements**

Entrepreneurship and Financial Support:

Over 989 refugees gained entrepreneurship skills for self-sufficiency and economic independence through RCL's trainings.

10 entrepreneurship training sessions helped **219 participants** develop business development skills.

8 digital skills and cybersecurity sessions supported over **80 participants** in navigating digital tools safely.

30 networking events connected **over 600 participants** with professional opportunities.

7 Lithuanian language courses supported **90 refugees** in improving their language proficiency and integration prospects.

The **Bridging the Financial Gap project** conducted 16 interviews and focus groups with refugees and community leaders. We also mapped 70+ local financial support organizations and released our 2025 needs assessment report.



Our **Achievements**

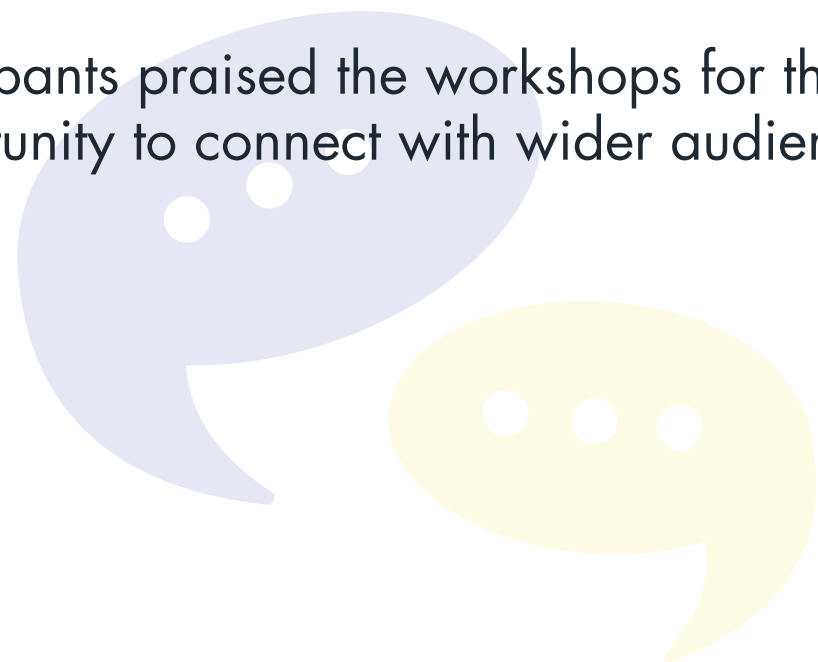
Storytelling Guidance:

The **Voices of Strength storytelling project** engaged **32 refugees in 4 workshops**, providing them with a platform to share their experiences and amplify their voices in Lithuanian society.

2 refugees received **individual storytelling consultations** from professional experts.

Representatives from **13 governmental and non governmental institutions** attended the event to promote EU values and refugee dialogue.

Participants praised the workshops for their empowering impact and the opportunity to connect with wider audiences.



Our **Achievements**

Community Engagement & Advocacy:

With the support of UNHCR, RCL organized **5 community meetings with 50 direct participants** and over **100 indirect beneficiaries**, strengthening refugee integration and support networks.

Mental health and **adaptation sessions** helped refugees navigate challenges and build resilience in their new environment.

Capacity Building and Partnerships:

Two **in-person study visits** enabled **knowledge exchange and the sharing of best practices** among various refugee support organizations.

The **Nordic-Baltic Capacity Building Project** facilitated cross-border knowledge exchange, boosting RCL's expertise and **collaboration with regional partners**.



Gratitude for Our Supporters

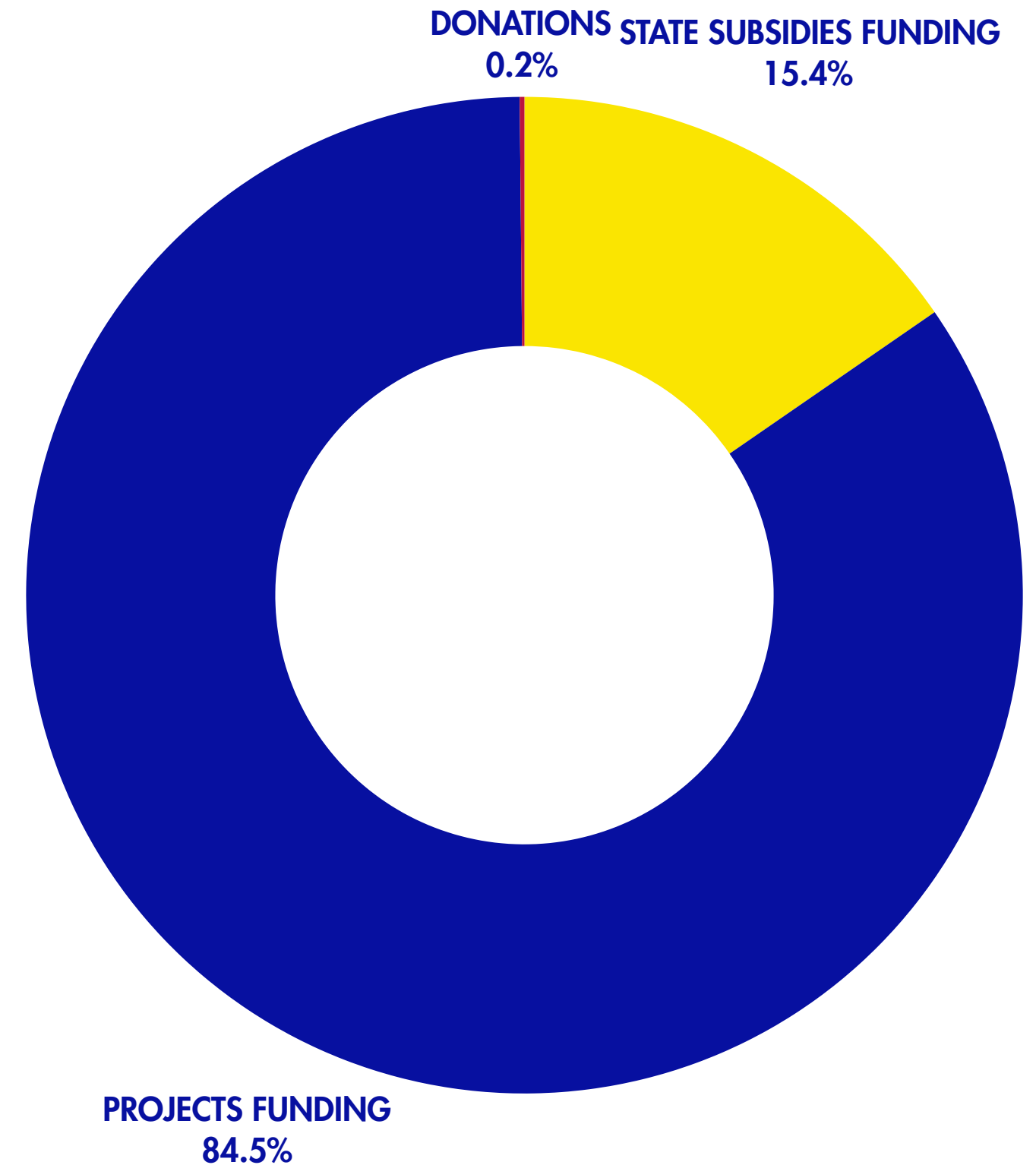
Reflecting on the RCL's impact in 2024, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who stood by us—individuals, organizations, interns, volunteers, mentors, speakers, trainers, partners, and donors.

Your dedication and generosity have been instrumental in empowering refugees and fostering their integration into Lithuanian society. Together, we have created meaningful and lasting change.

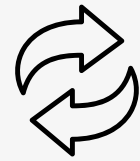


Financial Summary

Description	Amount (EURO)
STATE SUBSIDIES FUNDING	24307
PROJECTS FUNDING	133421
DONATIONS	243
Total	157971



Call for **Action for 2025**



Drive Change!

Your participation can greatly amplify our impact—whether through volunteering, mentoring, training, or offering consultancy.



Share Resources!

Providing access to venues or essential equipment, such as computers and projectors, greatly boosts our impact and efficiency.



Invest in Impact!

Donations fund our programs and initiatives, helping us address key issues and create lasting change. Join us in making a difference in 2025.



Goals for 2025

1 Strengthen organizational financial capacity and program sustainability by diversifying our sources of funding.

2 Build local and international partnerships to expand organizational capacity.



3 Enhance refugees' knowledge and abilities for socio-economic participation through consultations, training, and mentorship.

4 Advocate for refugee needs and challenges across institutions and social media through collaboration.



Thank **YOU!**

If you have any further inquiries or wish to explore potential collaboration opportunities, please do not hesitate to **contact us: info@refugeeslt.com**

<https://www.refugeeslt.com/>

