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With this quarterly newsletter, La Strada International wishes to inform and update you on developments in the field of trafficking in human beings and the activities of La Strada International and our member organisations. We welcome your feedback and input. Please [e-mail us](mailto:info@lastradainternational.org) by 1 September 2020 if you have news, information about your organisation, a new report or documentary or an outspoken opinion on (inter)national developments.

La Strada News !

La Strada International submits input for 3rd EU Anti-Trafficking Progress Report

The European Commission will soon publish their third progress report on human trafficking. This report will be based on reports submitted by EU Member States as per Article 20 of the Anti-Trafficking Directive and will assess the latest trends and challenges in addressing human trafficking as well as progress made and highlight issues that the EU and its Member States need to better address.

Civil Society were invited to also provide contributions. La Strada International (LSI) and several of our members submitted reports. In our [submission](#), we expressed concerns about the serious gaps in the implementation of the EU Anti-Trafficking Directive and other right provisions at EU and national level, and also that the previously set priorities of European Commission have still not been reached. La Strada International calls, in particular for European access to unconditional support, enhancement of identification of victims and more attention for the vulnerability of 3rd country nationals. LSI further recommends to stop Dublin returns of presumed trafficked persons and to improve access to legal residence and social inclusion.

La Strada International contributes to webinar on 20 years Palermo Protocol



On June 29th and 30th, LSI contributed to a [webinar](#) on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

This webinar organized by the UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, the Municipality of Palermo and the Italian NGO On the Road, comprised four virtual sessions to reflect back and look at the impact of the protocol. The UN Protocol was the first international treaty to (a) provide a broad definition of trafficking, b) recognise multiple facets of trafficking and (c) promote the full respect of the victims' human rights.

A diverse group of international speakers, including two LSI board members Liana Sorrentino and Evelyn Probst, stressed that national legislation and policies remain strongly rooted in the original approach of the Palermo Protocol with little attention paid to the human rights dimension. In particular, identification, victim support and protection remain linked with criminal proceedings and their outcomes in most countries. Speakers provided various recommendations, including promotion of unconditional support; more attention for the vulnerability of migrant workers and the impact of migration regulations; the need for adequate complaint and safe reporting mechanisms; better implementation of the non-punishment clause; binding obligations for states and the private sector, next to empowerment of workers.



The last session in particular focused on the possible need for a new international legal instrument to ensure better human rights protection. Whilst speakers supported the idea, they doubted, in particular, whether the current political climate would allow for the adoption of a more human rights-based instrument.

In her concluding remarks, the Special Rapporteur advocated for a re-orientation of the implementation of the Palermo Protocol through an integrated interpretation of binding and soft-law instruments adopted since 2000 and for national anti-trafficking legislation and regulations to be brought into compliance with human rights standards. She further stressed the importance to continue to consider the possibility of adopting a new international instrument addressing severe exploitation from a human rights-based approach, on the basis of which she offered a twelve-point final recommendation. The concluding statement will be posted online – most likely also on the website of On the Road and La Strada International - for civil society to endorse. Similarly, the recordings of the webinar will soon be available online.

La Strada Poland receives the Polish Business Roundtable Award



On 16th May, Irena Dawid, Director of La Strada Poland was presented with the [Polish Business Roundtable Award](#). This is one of the most prestigious Polish awards recognising outstanding business persons and social activists since 2012. The Award is granted in four categories: (1) for most exceptional achievements in business; (2) for innovative and visionary ventures that set new standards and trends; (3) for social projects that improve the lives of those in need – the category for which Irena was awarded; (4) and for an exceptional contribution to Poland’s economic and social development. This is a big recognition for all the work done by Irena Dawid and La Strada Poland. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the awards’ ceremony was cancelled. Read Irena’s [own reflections](#) on the award.

Decreases in identification and referral due to COVID-19 restrictions

In our last [newsletter](#), we reported about the first impact of COVID-19 on our work and on the situation of human trafficking. The safety measures and restrictions seem to have led to reductions in the identification and referral of trafficked persons in many European countries. According to a UK Home Office [Report](#), 2,871 people were referred to as possible victims of modern slavery to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) in

the first quarter of 2020. This is a 14% decrease from the previous quarter with labour exploitation remaining the most commonly reported offence in the UK.

Our member organisations attribute this decrease to the reduced activities of law enforcement and labour inspectorates as well as a lack of priorities and resources. In the Netherlands, registrations also seem to be influenced by data protection regulations, as since the enforcement of the GDPR regulations, registration figures have decreased, as many actors are not sure if they can still report human trafficking cases.

Next to the decline in referrals, LSI members continue to report on gaps and bottlenecks in practice and the vulnerability of migrant workers, which has become even more visible during the last few months. Especially the dependency of workers on recruitment and temping agencies, who along with organising employment, also organise housing and transport creates such vulnerability. Structural exploitation as well as health and safety risks are reported in various labour sectors where migrants work, including harvesting and the meat sector. For example, recently there was an [outbreak of Covid-19 in a German meat factory](#)

Suspended returns reinstated

An impact of the recent lifting of the Covid-19 restrictions reported by member organisations is the reinstatement of returns. LSI's member in Romania, Adpare, reported receiving daily requests for assistance from voluntary returning Romanian nationals, who had been trafficked for sexual or labour exploitation purposes and due to the lockdown stayed temporary in shelters. The main countries where victims are returning from are the UK, France, Germany, Sweden and Denmark.

In May, the UN Network on Migration [called](#) for the suspension of all forced returns during the pandemic and called for granting temporary residence to migrants. It is expected however that European countries will soon fully reinstate forced (Dublin) returns of trafficked persons. On a positive note, the European Commission announced to open the borders again for 3rd country national from several countries.

REST project on promoting Victims' Residency Status and protection

The forced Dublin returns of presumed trafficked persons are in contradiction with the protection all trafficked persons should receive and could result in a risk of inhuman or degrading treatment within the meaning of Article 4 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. The project [REST - Residency Status: strengthening the protection of trafficked persons](#) (2019 – 2021), coordinated by LSI's member LEFÖ in cooperation with 5 other members of LSI: Comité Contre l'esclavage Moderne (CCEM) in France, Proyecto Esperanza in Spain, CoMensha in the Netherlands, La Strada Moldova and Astra in Serbia, seeks to strengthen the right to residence and protection of third-country nationals trafficked in Europe by focusing on the gaps and challenges in their actual access to rights and services. The project comprises research and trainings including an in-depth analysis of the implementation of international standards at national level together with national seminars and a guide of promising practices is foreseen to address the matter of ensuring long-term protection to victims. In November, an international REST meeting will be held.

COMENSHA provides input to new Dutch action team to protect labour migrants

The Netherlands recently installed a special Task Force in order to improve the livelihood of labour migrants, focusing in particular on EU citizens. More than 400,000 migrant workers from the EU work in Dutch economic sectors like in distribution, agriculture and horticulture, construction, cleaning and the meat processing industry. The Dutch NGO CoMensha - member of LSI - provided input to this task force and

recommended among others the decoupling of housing and work arrangements and ensuring access to full rental protection rights, next to minimum housing conditions for migrant workers and the establishment of a temporary employment agency which imposes establishment and training requirements and a deposit, which can be used to compensate the injured migrant workers in the event of abuses.

CoMensha further welcomed the idea of establishing a central information helpline for migrant workers, focusing on information provision. The first [recommendations by the task force](#) (in Dutch only) have been published by the Dutch government.

La Strada Ukraine calls for adequate legislation on surrogated motherhood



Earlier this year, various media channels reported on the story of 51 babies born to surrogate mothers stranded in Ukraine as the Covid-19 lockdown prevented foreign adoptive parents from the US, Europe and elsewhere from collecting them. Commercial surrogacy is legal in Ukraine and attracts many couples from all over the world.

La Strada Ukraine receives about 100 phone calls annually about this issue and reports that surrogate mothers in Ukraine are not well protected legally e.g. the contracts they sign often contain provisions violating current civil legal norms and women are not properly informed in advance about the possible negative impacts and psychological and health consequences. For several years, La Strada Ukraine has raised concern about this, next to the risks of child trafficking. The organisation calls for stricter regulations and protection of rights of all actors involved.

On July 15, 2020 at 11. AM (Kiev time) La Strada Ukraine will organize a webinar ‘Surrogacy: reproductive technology, exploitation or human trafficking? Exacerbation and new challenges in conditions of the pandemic’. The event will be conducted with participation of international and national experts, representatives of state authorities and general public. Ukrainian – English translation will be provided. Registration is possible until July 7.

Anti-Slavery International and FLEX UK publish reports on impact of COVID-19



In April, LSI UK members, Anti-Slavery International (ASI) and FLEX both published reports on the impact of COVID-19. ASI launched a Guide for Policymakers, Donors and Business Leaders to ensure that responses to Covid-19 reach victims of modern slavery: ‘[Leaving No-one Behind](#)’. According to the organisation: ‘Any response to Covid-19 must be designed to specifically reach and benefit those in and vulnerable to slavery. “These people are often unreached by much government development policy and funds, and have been over-looked and excluded in past emergencies”.’ ASI calls for immediate and long-term support measures including ensuring inclusion in medical treatment, testing and social assistance, protection by social and financial support, due diligence by the private sector, continuation of labour inspections and suspension of immigration enforcement. In the

long run, States should work on creating better economies and communities that value everyone, ensuring minimum wages and suitable living conditions for all.

FLEX published the briefing [‘No Worker Left Behind: Protecting Vulnerable Workers from Exploitation During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic’](#), which examines the



impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on labour exploitation. It finds that the pandemic will raise the risk of exploitation for specific categories of workers, who had already been put in a vulnerable situation due to strict migration and social protection policies. FLEX’s briefing provides recommendations to protect these workers and ensure modern slavery offences do not rise as a result of the virus: ‘Struggling to make ends meet, low-paid workers are at high risk of falling into debt and facing destitution,’ thus heightening the risks of vulnerability to modern slavery. In April, FLEX also published the report [Opportunity Knocks: improving responses to labour exploitation with secure reporting](#) looking at how immigration enforcement, labour inspection and policing work together in the UK. It explores the methods by which information flows between them, the legal basis for such flows and the extent to which personal information is processed. Due to evidence of the detriment of such practices to migrant workers as well as examples of effective firewalls from jurisdictions abroad, FLEX calls for 'secure reporting' mechanisms to be implemented in the UK.

More surveys, reports and guidelines on the impact of COVID -19

Whilst it is still difficult to assess the exact impact of COVID-19, numerous NGOs and international organisations have started initiatives to evaluate the pandemic’s impact on human trafficking and related issues. A [thematic brief](#), based on a rapid stocktaking by UNODC finds that human trafficking victims are being denied shelter due to COVID-19 lockdowns. Delta 8.7 [finds](#) that COVID-19 heightens risks for those already exploited, increases the risks of exploitation and disrupts response efforts. In addition, Walk Free published a [report](#) examining the key risks of Covid-19 for migrants and other vulnerable workers and providing practical guidance as well as examples of measures that businesses and governments can take to mitigate these risks. [Research](#) into the irregularity of foreign agricultural workers in Italy finds that the Italian agricultural sector is fully dependent on an irregular workforce and fears that the pandemic will worsen the conditions for laborers.

Earlier also [Verité](#), [Polaris](#), [Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime](#), [Freedom United](#), [Mekong Club](#), [UNODC](#) and the [Society of Corporate Compliance & Ethics](#) have released analyses and guidance on how COVID-19 could lead to increased risks of modern slavery and human trafficking. The World Health Organisation published an [advocacy brief](#) on ‘Gender and COVID-19’. IOM launched a [guidance](#) for employers and businesses on protecting the rights of labour migrants during the pandemic. Lancet Migration has been publishing a [series of situational policy briefs](#) on the COVID-19 response in relation to particular migrant and refugee contexts. Some organisations continue to collect data and evidence. Eurofound recently launched an [online survey](#). In addition, ODIHR and UN Women collected data through surveys with survivors of trafficking and frontline responders to ensure the implementation of a human rights-based, gender-sensitive and victim-centred approach to trafficking in persons during and post COVID-19. Their report is due soon. See more updates on statements, resources and news on the latest Covid-19 related issues on the [LSI Covid-19 webpage](#).

What's going on ?

ECHR publishes judgement on Article 4 prohibition of slavery/forced labour

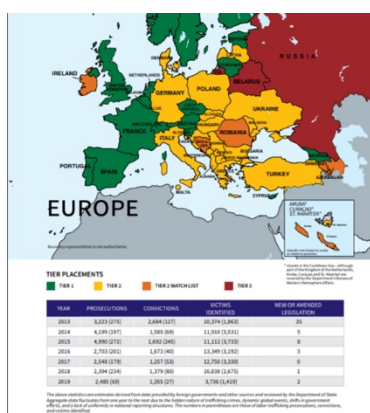
On June 25th, the Grand Chamber of the **ECHR** published its judgment in the case of S.M. v. Croatia. The European Court of Human Rights held, unanimously, that there had been: **a violation of Article 4** (prohibition of slavery/prohibition of forced labour) of the European Convention on Human Rights. The case concerned a Croatian woman's complaint of human trafficking and forced prostitution. In the case of S.M. v. Croatia, the Court found a violation of the prohibition of slavery and forced labour on account of the shortcomings in the investigation by the Croatian authorities into the applicant's allegations. The applicant, a Croatian national, complained of being forced into prostitution over several months. She alleged that the authorities had failed to respond adequately to her complaint, and maintained that no suitable legal framework existed in Croatia for dealing with the issues raised by her case.

The Court held that Croatia was to pay the applicant 5,000 euros (EUR) in respect of non-pecuniary damage. See further the [Press release](#) as well as the [Webcast of the hearing](#). According to the Bulgaria lawyer, Natasha Dobrova – who closely works with Animus Association, 'the greatest achievement of the new judgement is that the Grand Chamber cements the liberal understanding that prostitution can be consensual and is not by default exploitation. Accordingly, the Grand Chamber does not use the term trafficking for the 'purpose of sexual exploitation' but 'trafficking for the purpose of exploitation of prostitution'.

Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting

At the end of April, the international network of investigative journalists OCCRP (Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting) launched a series of articles under the common name [Slave to Progress](#) which deal in detail with one of the largest cases of labour exploitation in recent history – the SerbAz case. Serbia and Northern Macedonia nationals were exploited most brutally, working on the construction of capital state facilities in Baku (Azerbaijan) in the period 2007-2009. So far, four longer articles have been published in this series, the third of which deals with court cases initiated by workers against the perpetrators of this crime at the European Court of Human Rights. Many of these proceedings were initiated thanks to testimonies collected by LSI's member ASTRA. [Read](#) the full text in English.

20th edition of the US Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report

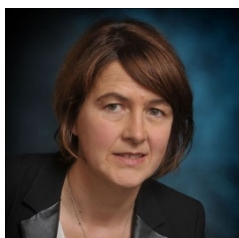


On June 25th, the US State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons published the 2020 edition of the [US Trafficking in Persons Report](#). This report is the U.S. Government's 'principal diplomatic tool to engage foreign governments on human trafficking'. Using a ranking system, it places countries in tiers: Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 2 Watch List and Tier 3. Like earlier years most Western European countries are placed in Tier 1 (16 EU countries and the UK), however, Germany, Poland, Denmark and Ireland lost their Tier 1 positions in earlier years. Most Central and Eastern European countries are placed in Tier 2. The Tier 2 Watch List included Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia Herzegovina and Ireland. Belarus and Russia are the only two European countries in Tier 3.

The first feedback received from LSI members shows recognition of most of the gaps identified in the report by the US State department e.g. the absence of national referral mechanisms in several countries or

inadequate implementation of existing NRMs and action plans, lacking data collection and decreasing numbers of identification of victims, as well as the lacking attention for labour exploitation. However, it is acknowledged by our membership that the TIP report remains clearly a diplomatic tool and reflects the US point of view, moreover much focus is put on prosecution.

HRC most likely appoints Siobhán Mullaly for UN Special Trafficking Rapporteur



A total of 49 candidates [applied](#) for the mandate of UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings. On June 3rd, the Consultative Group to the HRC President published their [report](#) shortlisting 4 persons and recommended Ms. Siobhán Mullaly from Ireland. The HRC President, following this advice has now [recommended](#) Mullaly to be appointed as the new UN SR and it is expected that she will be appointed in July during the 44th HRC Council. Mullaly has extensive experience in human trafficking.

She is a Professor of Human Rights Law, the Director of the Irish Centre for Human Rights at NUI Galway and the former President of GRETA. LSI is looking forward to cooperating closely with her.

New report by current UN SR on Trafficking published

On July 3rd, the current UN SR on Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, Ms. Maria Grazia Giammarinaro is expected to launch her latest and last [Report](#) during her mandate. In this report she takes stock of previous research and reports, and analyses of protection gaps in the legal and policy framework to prevent and combat human trafficking. She criticises States' restrictive migration policies highlighting how they increase migrants' vulnerability to trafficking and other abuses, including in situations of conflict. The Rapporteur also expresses her concerns about States' treatment of trafficked persons as simply tools in the criminal investigation process and she reflects on the long-term needs of trafficked persons for reintegration and social inclusion.

She recommends States to move towards a social justice approach and to establish safe and legal migration channels, implement a firewall between labour inspections and immigration enforcement, and regulate recruitment agencies. Furthermore, she highlights the need to provide early assistance to trafficked persons, regardless of whether they cooperate with the criminal investigation and to not prosecute trafficked persons for crimes they were forced to commit as a result of trafficking. She also calls on States to provide free legal assistance and ensure that trafficked persons can obtain compensation, including through civil and labour courts, and ensure availability of long-term employment and training opportunities.

The mandate of the current UN SR will finish on 31 July 2020. LSI would like to use this opportunity to thank Maria Grazia Giammarinaro for her personal commitment and critical voice during her mandate and her general close cooperation with civil society, including LSI and member organisations.

European Council wants to enhance financial investigation to fight serious crime

On June 17th, the European Council committed to scale-up financial investigations to fight serious and organised crime and [called](#) upon the Commission to consider measures related to strengthening the legal framework, improve management of assets recovery and interconnect national centralised bank account registries, which would accelerate the access to financial information and facilitate cross border cooperation. The Council also called on Member States to enhance cooperation and ensure that financial investigations

form part of all kinds of criminal investigations regarding organized crime as well as to use the potential of the newly created [European Financial and Economic Crime Centre](#) by Europol.

Estimations consider that the proceeds of organised crimes in the EU constitute 110 billion euros per year and that confiscation rates remain very low. While the EU has significantly strengthened its legal framework for countering money-laundering as well as for access of law enforcement authorities to financial information, assets recovery and financial investigations still need serious enhancement, especially as noted by LSI, lacking confiscation of assets of perpetrators often prevents the payment of compensation for victims of trafficking. Moreover, to secure proceeds and evidence to substantiate the compensation claim early financial investigation is required.

Council of Europe publishes first 3rd round monitoring reports

In June, Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) published the first series of reports in the third monitoring round on [Austria](#), the [Slovak Republic](#) and [Cyprus](#). The reports provide an analysis of access to justice and effective remedies for victims of trafficking and examines progress in the implementation of previous GRETA recommendations. Whilst progress has been noted for all three countries, GRETA calls for more action from the respective governments.

Austria has taken steps to support persons trafficked including providing access to compensation and training of officials on the procedures for access to compensation. However, in practice, access to compensation seems non-existent. In the Slovak Republic, the information provided to victims appears to be formalistic without verifying whether the victim understands their rights and the procedures. The Slovak Republic has also set up a State compensation scheme, however, to date, only one victim of THB has received state compensation, and almost no victims of THB have been paid compensation by perpetrators. In Cyprus, the obligation to provide information on victims' rights is not always respected. In addition, no legal aid has been provided to victims of trafficking, and thus far only two applications for legal aid to claim compensation has been approved. In addition, the creation of a victim's support fund has been delayed.

EU Parliament publishes new analyses on human rights due diligence legislation

There is growing momentum towards mandatory due diligence, both at the EU and Member State level. On April 29th, the EU Commissioner for Justice [announced](#) that the Commission commits to introducing rules for mandatory corporate environmental and human rights due diligence. To inform the European Parliament's position, the Parliament's Human Rights Subcommittee (DROI) requested two briefings on specific and related human rights issues. The first briefing addresses substantive elements concerning the scope of a future EU regulation. The second briefing discusses options for monitoring and enforcement of due diligence obligations, as well as different ways to ensure access to justice for victims of human rights abuses. The briefings were presented at a [joint hearing](#) of three committees (DROI, JUST, INTA) of the European Parliament on June 22nd.



This was followed by a [joint open letter](#) from 45 CSOs and trade unions coordinated by the ECCJ to the Commissioner endorsing the decision to propose legislation on corporate due diligence and director's duties and stressing the need for a robust legal framework including new horizontal legislation on mandatory human rights and environmental corporate due diligence and new sustainable corporate governance legislation focused on directors' duties.

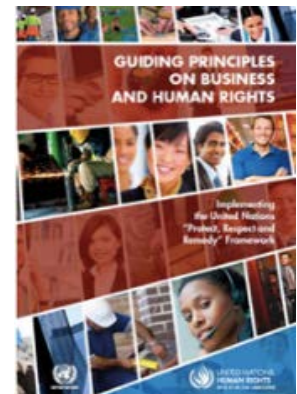
Last year in December 2019, a coalition of a hundred organisations [called](#) on the EU to develop effective legislation obliging companies and financial institutions to address the human rights and environmental impact of their global operations and supply chains.

Other European countries also have taken action. [Switzerland](#) is now in the final stage of adopting mandatory human rights due diligence legislation. Moreover, the UK government, which has legislation combatting modern slavery since 2015, has taken a strong stance by publishing a [statement](#) assessing the risk of modern slavery in its annual spending and setting out the governments' efforts towards eradicating modern slavery from its supply chains.

New Roadmap on UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

The UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights [has announced](#) its plan to develop an ambitious roadmap for implementing the UNGPs more widely and broadly between now and 2030.

At their conception, the UNGPs were regarded as a major step forward to prevent and address business-related human rights abuse. They are a framework for State duties and business responsibilities to achieve the UNGPs' vision of 'tangible results for affected individuals and communities, and thereby also contributing to a socially sustainable globalisation.' The official launch event is on the 7th July and one of the first steps is to conduct wide-ranging stakeholder consultations to assess existing gaps and challenges. Click [here](#) to take part in this consultation.



ICRSE: lacking evidence of linkage between Trafficking and Pornography

The International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe (ICRSE) has published an [open letter](#) addressed to the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) sharing concerns about the online event 'Cross-Linkages between Human Trafficking and Pornography: Myth or Reality?' that took place on May 4th, 2020. In the letter, Luca Stevenson Coordinator of ICRSE states 'We are

'Whilst we appreciate OSCE/ODIHR efforts to open the discussion about porn industry as one of the sectors where people can be trafficked or fall prey to exploitation and abuse, we call for a more nuanced debate with a representation of different views, including those of sex workers, in particular those working in the porn industry.'

disappointed that the event organised by ODIHR which mission is to promote democracy, rule of law, human rights and tolerance and non-discrimination on any grounds provided an only one-sided view on the issue of pornography and clearly conflated the porn industry with ('technically sophisticated form' of) human trafficking. There is no evidence that the majority, or even a significant minority, of people working in the porn industry, are victims of human trafficking.' In the letter, ICRSE further calls for inclusion of the voices of sex workers.

What's new ?

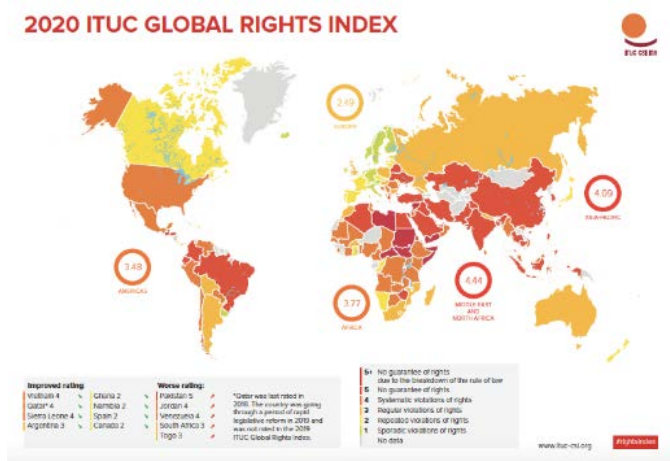
PICUM looks at ability to access justice for labour abuse and exploitation in Europe



Although undocumented workers have working rights, they are often far from grasp. Who can stand up for their rights if they risk not only losing their only source of income, but being uprooted from their lives, detained and deported? PICUM's [new report](#) 'A worker is a Worker' examines undocumented migrants' ability to access justice for labour abuse and exploitation in 15 European countries, including the UK. This research demonstrates the need for enforceable employment rights by all workers, irrespective of immigration status. See also the [video](#) launched with the report.

ITUC releases 2020 Global Rights Index on protection of workers' rights

On June 18th, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) released its [Global Rights Index](#) mapping international worker rights' violations and naming the worst offending countries. The findings of the report cover a wide range of abuses, including violations of collective bargaining and the right to strike, excluding workers from joining unions, government surveillance on unions and their members, violence and killings and the limiting freedom of speech. The index shows that in several European countries, social movements and strikes have been curbed by the authorities leading to arbitrary arrests and some violence, whilst in some Eastern European countries, independent trade union movements were heavily suppressed. In more than a quarter of all European countries (26%), workers were arrested and detained. 38% of these countries prevented workers from exercising the right to establish or join a trade union, whilst 56% violated the right to collective bargaining. 72% of the European countries violated the right to strike. Click [here](#) to access the report and the infographics.



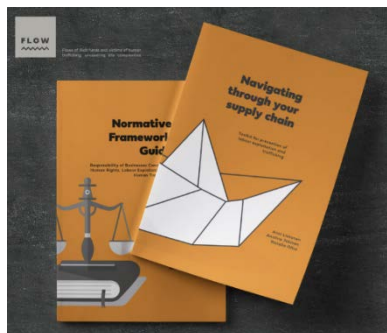
Clean Clothes reports labour rights violations in European brands' backyards



A [report](#) released on April 24th by Clean Clothes Campaign and Bread for the World once more [convincingly shows](#) that labour rights violations occur in European brands' backyards. The research looked into the supply chains of a range of German brands and discovered that workers in Croatia, Serbia, Ukraine and Bulgaria face dire working conditions. This has been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis revealing the true face of many garment companies. Instead of taking responsibility for the workers who made their clothes, they leave factories without cash to pay wages by cancelling orders or pressing suppliers to give them large discounts.

The same has been highlighted in the latest [Report](#) from the ECCHR examining the impact of COVID-19 on the garment industry. The report reflects on the power imbalance between the consumer-facing companies and the suppliers which allows the former to set the agenda leading to serious repercussions on the rights of workers. It calls on the European governments and decision-makers to introduce obligatory and enforceable due diligence legislation in order to prevent unfair trading practices.

New Toolkit for responsible businesses



HEINI has released two publications as part of a toolkit promoting good business practice aimed at companies looking to take steps to ensure their company is not complicit in labour exploitation through subcontracting or using recruitment agencies. These publications are part of the EU-funded project 'FLOW; Flows of illicit funds and victims of human trafficking: uncovering the complexities' of which LSI is member of the advisory board.

The first publication provides five tools allowing companies to implement due diligence processes by providing concrete measures to navigate and control complex supply chain processes. The second publication provides an overview of the existing legal frameworks of companies' human rights responsibilities focusing on labour exploitation and trafficking. Read more [here](#).

In addition, HEINI has released a report - [Shady business](#) which looks at the interconnected web of labour trafficking, exploitation and financial flows in three countries: Finland, Latvia and Bulgaria. Focusing on and analysing a number of concrete cases, this report uncovers the business model of labour exploitation. This is complimented by the report, [Uncovering labour trafficking - the investigation tool for law enforcement and checklist for labour inspectors](#), which provides practical tools practical use of different authorities and actors who might come across labour trafficking and exploitation cases in their line of work.

Nothing by us, without us: Survivor involvement in anti-trafficking policy-making

A new [practical guidance](#) 'Nothing by us, without us', created by the University of Nottingham Rights Lab and Survivor Alliance is intended to support local and national policy-makers in government, business and public services to involve survivors of modern slavery offences in their anti-trafficking work.

Critical evaluations of technology's role in anti-trafficking

In April, GAATW – of which LSI is a member - published a new [ATR Special Edition issue](#) focusing on how technology contributes to exploitation and how it can serve to disrupt human trafficking. The issue contains six thematic articles, three short articles, and the Editorial. The Special Issue converges around one central point: the factors enabling and sustaining human trafficking and exploitation are complex and require political will – not technological solutionist fixes. According to GAATW, 'the current anti-traffickers obsession with technological 'solutions' just draws attention and resources away from socio-economic and political issues i.e. decent work, gender, economic and racial justice, the free movement of people, and quality public services and it is more urgent than ever to re-focus our attention on the larger issues'.

Council of Europe launches guidance on entitlement to international protection



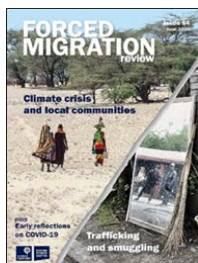
GRETA has issued a [Guidance Note on the entitlement of victims of trafficking, and persons at risk of being trafficked, to international protection](#). This Note expands upon earlier UNHCR guidelines and provides an analysis of the application of the principles of international protection in the context of human trafficking. It emphasises the right for presumed victims of trafficking to apply for asylum whilst in the identification process. It also highlights the importance of the principle

of non-punishment for offences committed whilst being trafficked. Furthermore, the guidance underlines the need for risk assessments of victims being returned as per the Dublin Regulation to prevent returns to a country where they risk being re-trafficked.

Protecting NGO work in support of refugees and other migrants

The Expert Council on NGO Law of the Conference of INGOs has adopted [Guidelines on Protecting NGO Work in Support of Refugees and Other Migrants](#). This follows the December Study, [‘Using Criminal Law to Restrict the Work of NGOs Supporting Refugees and Other Migrants in Council of Europe Member States’](#) which highlighted the increased criminalisation of humanitarian assistance. The guidelines are meant to direct COE Member States, the EU and international organisations in ensuring that policies preventing human trafficking and smuggling are in compliance with the standards relating to the treatment of non-governmental organisations and the protection and promotion of civil society space in Europe.

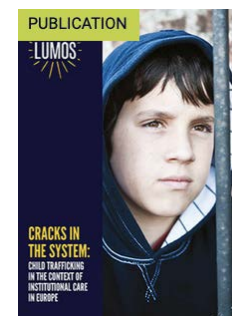
Forced Migration review focusing on trafficking and smuggling



The journal [Forced Migration Review](#) has published its latest issue focusing on trafficking and smuggling as well as the climate crisis and local communities. There are two articles focusing on the prosecution of trafficking offences and victim identification and protection. The first article explores the implication of ritual oaths taken by Nigerian women trafficked for sexual exploitation to create strong bonds between the women and their traffickers thus providing an impediment to identification. The second article reflects on the limitations of criminal prosecutions, considering whether civil litigation may provide an avenue for justice and accountability. Other articles include the return of asylum seekers to Italy via the Dublin procedure, smuggling and trafficking from Vietnam to Europe, and smuggling in the Balkans.

New report on child trafficking and institutional care

A [new report](#) from Lumos ‘Cracks in the System’, seeks to understand the link between institutional care and child trafficking in Europe. It finds four trends:



- Children are recruited and trafficked into institutions for the purpose of financial profit and other forms of exploitation;
- Children are trafficked from orphanages/institutions to other forms of exploitation;
- Child trafficking victims and unaccompanied children are often placed in institutions for “protection”, which can put them at risk of (re)-trafficking;
- Care-leavers are more vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking.

From these trends, the report puts forward a number of recommendations to address this phenomenon of “institution-related trafficking”.

SDGs Decade of Action – Trade union policy responses

Against the backdrop of the final decade of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs, combined with the structural weaknesses revealed by the Covid-19 pandemic, ITUC has published a new policy paper. The central message of this policy paper is the need for a new social contract with SDG 8 at its core. It underlines the role of the SDGs in rebuilding a resilient economy and ensuring a sustainable Covid-19 recovery. It furthermore calls for ‘extraordinary and radical measures’ that are comprehensive in order to ensure ‘systematic change based on interlinked and complementary policies at social, economic and environmental level’. The report provides a number of policy recommendations to ensure that governments are moving in the right direction and are successful in creating a decade of SDG action. Read more [here](#).



This follows ITUC new report ‘[Towards mandatory due diligence in global supply chains](#)’ which calls for mandatory human rights’ due diligence legislation.

What’s new on the web ?



Twitter campaign on ILO Convention C190

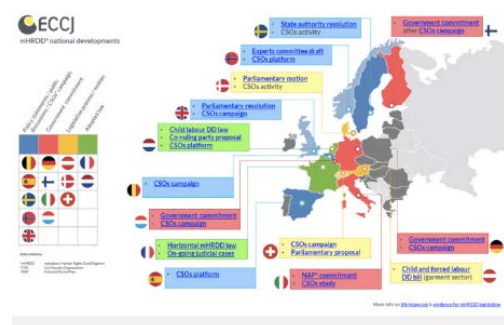
The International Trade Union, Public Services International, is organising a [Twitter campaign](#) on Friday, June 19th, to urge ratification of ILO Convention C190 on ending violence and harassment in the world of work. The campaign is focusing on Germany, France, Sweden and Spain, plus the EU for a political endorsement.

The Convention acts as an important instrument to hold employers and states accountable for violence and harassment faced by workers. Importantly, the Convention has a broad definition covering workers in the informal economy as well as jobseekers, trainees, interns, apprentices and volunteers, including during their commute on the way to and from work. In other words, it can be useful for many situations that do not “rise up” to the level of trafficking and can thus offer protection and remedy to a larger number of people.

Mapping mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence progress in Europe

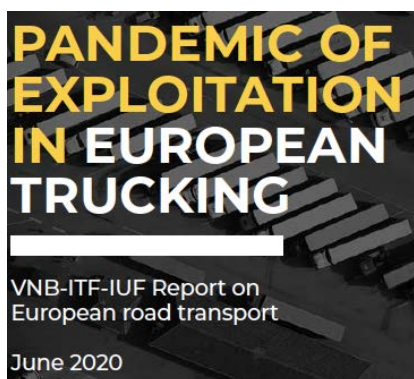
ECCJ has created a map providing an overview of the different mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence (mHRDD) laws and proposals in Europe. The map is classified into four categories (policy statements, government commitments, legislative processes, adopted laws) depending on the state of progress.

See the map [here](#).



Finance & human rights: regulatory overview

This paper provides a general overview, as well as providing key aspects, of the development of different legislation and frameworks in Europe applying in the area of finance and human rights. It comprises EU regulation (in force and upcoming); national regulations and developments in Europe and voluntary frameworks. Read more [here](#).



New Report on European Road Transport

On June 25th, the FNV-VNB-ITF-IUF [Report on European Road Transport](#) was launched. It raises the alarm about exploitative practices facing truck drivers in Europe for many reasons. According to the authors, decades of subcontracting and deregulation have facilitated and hidden the exploitation of drivers in the trucking industry, while multinational customers of transport services have continued to demand lower transport prices. Moreover, many multinational companies seem uninterested or unaware of which trucking companies move their goods, the exploitation that subcontractors often rely on, and the health and safety risks involved. The report also finds that Covid-19 has provided an opportunity for road transport companies to further exploit truck drivers, cut transport prices and wages as well as reducing health and safety conditions across Europe.

Previously, LSI and its Members worked closely with trade union representatives of FNV-VNB to support severely exploited truck drivers in the Netherlands, Denmark, Austria, Poland, Germany and other European countries. For some cases, FNV-VNB managed to secure compensation whilst also launching investigations into trafficking.

Online Modern Slavery Map updated

The Interactive Map for Business of Anti-Human Trafficking Organizations, the so-called [Modern Slavery Map](#) has been updated. The map now includes 112 initiatives working on human trafficking and related issues such as child labour.

New online map shows domestic slavery legislation

The University of Nottingham's new [Antislavery in Domestic Legislation World Map](#) is an interactive online database that maps all UN Member States' domestic legislation against international anti-slavery commitments. It covers slavery, the slave trade, servitude, forced labour, as well as institutions and practices similar to slavery and human trafficking.

App to find employment for migrants

[WORKEEN](#) is a new app launched to help migrants, including asylum seekers and refugees, to enter the job market. Drawing from research conducted in the H2020 project and the [Sirius Project](#), it aims to provide practical guidance and hands-on, soft-skills training for anyone entering the labour market for the first time. This app is the first of its kind offering interactive 'training' and is now available in several EU countries.

COVID-19 WATCH Dutch Trade Union EVV

The European Trade Union Confederation of Trade Unions (ETUC) in coordination with the European Union Institute (ETUI) has set up a regularly updated COVID-19 watch. The first overviews are about working time reductions, measures to support households and measures against mass redundancies. This should allow trade unions from all over Europe to inspire others in proposing measures.



National measures targeting seasonal workers to address labour shortages (particularly in the agricultural sector)

ETUC briefing note on Seasonal Workers is of particular interest, as it outlines national measures targeting seasonal workers to address labour shortages. A number of short-term measures are being implemented at the national level to address labour shortages and ensure that food supplies are not jeopardised, but these measures often fall short in safeguarding workers' health and safety despite the additional risks related to the current pandemic. The situation for seasonal workers previous to the outbreak was concerning. This sector is blighted by low incomes and long working hours. The workers, many of whom are undocumented, live in accommodation provided by the employer. This accommodation often lacks running water, electricity and access to sanitary facilities. These close quarters risk increased infections as it is difficult to socially distance. Whilst EU law obliges EU Member States and employers to take necessary steps to protect the health and safety of seasonal workers, the legislation does not sufficiently remedy the current (and neither previous) situation. To read more, including the policy recommendations, click [here](#).

IOM Counter Human Trafficking Course

IOM has released an [online course](#) designed for those familiar with humanitarian responses but unfamiliar with anti-trafficking interventions in humanitarian responses. There are 11 modules free of charge and it provides a good foundation to show how human trafficking poses a very real risk to people affected by conflict, instability, natural disaster, and displacement.

What's happening where ?

- **30 June - 17 July 2020** – 44th Human Rights Council session – appointment new UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings
- **20-22 July** virtual OSCE High-Level Alliance 'Ending Impunity: delivering justice through prosecuting trafficking in human beings'. For Registration see <https://events.osce.org/2020-aat/registration>
- **30 July 2020** - UN World Day against Human Trafficking
- **20-21 August 2020**, [International Conference on Human Trafficking, Slavery and Exploitation](#), London, UK
- **23 August 2020**- International Day for Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition
- **15 September 2020** – 25th Anniversary La Strada – start of social media actions
- **15 September 2020** – 25th Anniversary of La Strada Poland
- **21-25 September 2020** – week of Action [#EU4FairWork campaign](#)
- **24-25 September 2020** – NGO Platform Meeting National NGOs - EU practices to national civil society groups – 20th Anniversary Open Gate
- **18 October 2020** – EU Anti-Trafficking Day (German Presidency),
- **27-29 October 2020** – LSI's NGO Platform meeting and celebration of LSI' 25th anniversary, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

What's on your mind ?

What will the world look like after coronavirus?

OpenDemocracy and University College London's Department of Education, Practice and Society have launched a [competition](#) looking for the submissions of images, video or text that explore ambitious ideas about how governments, citizens, scientists, artists can shape a different and better future post-pandemic.

Could Covid-19 provide a new positive perspective on migration?

This [article](#) looks at two different outcomes of Covid-19. One that is pessimistic where the pandemic fuels fear, racism and the exclusion of the most vulnerable. The second is optimistic where the pandemic reminds every one of their own vulnerability and reveals how much societies actually rely on migrants.