

Newsletter September

La Strada International wishes to inform and update you on developments in the field of trafficking in human beings and activities of the Platform and member organisations. We welcome your feedback and input. Please [e-mail us](#)

La Strada News



LSI Public event on shrinking space and role civil society in anti-trafficking field

On 15th September La Strada International organised a public debate on the role of civil society in addressing trafficking in human beings and the shrinking space for NGOs. The event can still be watched [here](#). See [more](#)

Anniversary timeline on the LSI Platform's history launched

On 15th September, La Strada International concluded its 25th anniversary year. For this occasion, the Platform released a [time line video](#) that shows its journey, from when it was launched as a small La Strada project established in three countries in 1995 to now, being a European Platform with 25 members and 5 associate members in 24 European countries.

LSI organises NGO Platform in Amsterdam

On 16th and 17th September, LSI organised its annual Platform meeting in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Sixteen members and two associate members joined the meeting live, while others participated online. Together they discussed LSI's new strategy plan, [focus areas](#) and action plan for 2022 as well as LSI's due diligence strategy. See [more](#)

LSI and members provide input for consultation on EU Trafficking directive

In July, the European Commission published a combined [evaluation roadmap/inception impact assessment](#) on “Fighting human trafficking – review of EU rules”. This public consultation, which closed on 16 September 2021, aimed to gather views relevant for both the evaluation of the Directive and the impact assessment. You can see the submissions by [La Strada International](#), [KOK](#), [PAG-Asa](#), [ESWA](#) (formerly ICRCE) and [Victim Support Europe](#). See [more](#)

Members News



LSI member in Belarus to be liquidated

In July the Belarusian Ministry of Justice has filed a civil suit in the Supreme Court to liquidate Gender Perspectives, which is LSI's member in Belarus. The General Prosecution office also launched a criminal investigation against the organisation. The organisation faces liquidating on 28th of September. It is estimated that currently around 350 civil society organisations have been liquidated or are in process of liquidation in Belarus. This happened after President Lukashenko vowed to continue, what he called a “mopping-up operation” against civil society activists who he denounced as “bandits and foreign agents”.

The Council of Europe monitoring mechanism GRETA will visit Belarus from 28 September until 1 October. It is hoped that they will raise the issue with the Belarusian authorities. See also the earlier related [update](#) at our website.

Labour Exploitation Advisory Group (LEAG) celebrates fifth anniversary

To celebrate its fifth anniversary, members of the Labour Exploitation Advisory Group (LEAG), coordinated by LSI's member FLEX in the UK, have prepared a four-part blog series in which they share their experiences working with and for those affected by labour exploitation. In the blog series also their views are presented on what is still needed to address and prevent it. Read [more](#)

Payoke finalises two projects on human trafficking

Two projects led by Belgium-based member [Payoke](#) are soon coming to an end. Firstly, the AMIF-funded project "[Life Beyond the Shelter](#)" – which aimed to enhance long-term support for third-country national trafficked persons. Independent living skill training, mentoring, and transitional housing are some of the transferable tools Payoke and its partners are releasing at the closing event of the project.

A second EU-funded project "[Inclusive, holistic care for migrant and refugee victims of sexual violence](#)" (INHeRE), has been coordinated by the University of Ghent, with the participation of a broad consortium, including Payoke and LSI's partners PICUM and VSE. INHeRE aims to strengthen the capacity building of key professionals working with vulnerable migrant victims of sexual violence through tailored tools and streamlined care pathways across professions, from identification to referral and care. The INHeRE final conference takes place on October 4th. You can register [here](#)

Anti-Slavery International releases report on climate-induced modern slavery

In September, Anti-Slavery International and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) have released the report "[Climate-induced Migration and Modern Slavery](#)". The report proves the existence of a relationship between climate change and modern slavery through case studies based in South and West Africa and formulates suggestions for policymakers.

CSOs address the role of social audits in Human Rights Due Diligence

Anti-Slavery International and several other civil society organizations including PICUM and Clean Clothes Campaign have signed an open letter to EU institutions in order to ensure legal liability for social auditors and an explicit exclusion of audits and certifications as evidence of appropriate due diligence. Read [more](#)

KOK publishes study “Rights of Trafficked Persons during Criminal Proceedings

The German NGO Network against Trafficking in Human Beings, KOK has published a new study on the rights of trafficked persons during criminal proceedings in Germany. From October 2019 to April 2021, KOK carried out a project examining the newly introduced criminal offences relating to trafficking in human beings and their tangible impact on criminal proceedings. See [more](#)

What is going on?

FRA report warns of deterioration of civic space in the EU

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) published the second report on Protecting civic space in the EU, building on the previous one from 2018. This report [Protecting civic space in the EU](#) highlights that civil society organisations across the EU face threats, attacks, funding cuts and disproportionate restrictions as well as other challenges and that the Coronavirus pandemic has worsened their working conditions. See [more](#)



EU parliament adopts plans for targeted legislation on gender based violence

On 16th of September, Members of the European Parliament [adopted](#) by 427 votes in favour, 119 against, and 140 abstentions a [legislative initiative](#), based on a proposed

resolution and [report](#) by the FEMM and LIBE committee. This initiative demands targeted legislation and policies to address all forms of violence and discrimination based on gender (against women and girls, but also against LGBTIQ+ persons), whether offline or online. See [more](#)

EU to ban products made with forced labour

During the annual State of the Union speech, EU Commission President Ursula Von Der Leyen declared that the EU is working on a legal instrument to ban the import of products made with forced labour. Forced labour is currently estimated to affect roughly 25 million people. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the most involved sectors are domestic work, construction, factory manufacturing, agriculture and fishing, as well as the sex industry. Read [more](#)

UNTOC Implementation Review Mechanism

Outside of the conference rooms, government focal points and designated experts are beginning the process of country reviews under UNTOC's Implementation Review Mechanism. Non-governmental actors have a central role to play in reviewing states' performance against their commitments under the convention, despite the narrow role afforded to them in the mechanism's rules. See also a [guide](#) for NGOs developed by LSI and GAATW.

Civil society can seek support of the GI-TOC and the UNODC Civil Society Team and engage with governments and other stakeholders in some countries. See the GI-TOC's [overview](#) for how to engage with the mechanism. See also our earlier [article](#) on the UN Review Mechanism and the role of civil society.

Greece first European country to ratify ILO Convention 190

On 30 August 2021, the Government of Greece deposited with the Director-General of the ILO the instruments of ratification of the [Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 \(No. 187\)](#) and the [Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 \(No. 190\)](#). See [more](#)

Revised Draft of proposed binding treaty on business and human rights a "toothless" instrument?

The third draft of the UN Business & Human Rights Treaty was published on 17 August. The NGO Global Campaign has reacted to this renewed version affirming that the changes

adopted so far are mainly cosmetic, rhetoric and ineffective. According to the NGO, the new text uses vague, indeterminate and even non-legal lexicon that may compromise its interpretation and application. Read [more](#)

What's new?

Handbook and guidelines on compensation for victims of sexual exploitation

[Faircom](#), a project funded by the European Commission to propose a change in the procedure for claiming compensation for victims of sexual violence, has reached its final stages. The project produced an handbook for operators from Victim Support Services; organized specialized trainings for operators and legal professionals and carried out local awareness-raising events. The consortium also launched a [website](#) with all the information needed to apply for compensation and identify the nearest support organisation.

Practitioners guide for developing and monitoring Anti-Trafficking Response

The **Practitioner's Guide for Developing and Monitoring the National Anti-trafficking Response**, earlier developed by ICMPD and aimed at supporting the relevant stakeholders in the process of development of the anti-trafficking response on local and regional level has been revised and updated. The Practitioner's Guide is a product of the regional project for "Preventing and Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings – PaCT", commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by ICMPD together with GIZ and MARRI as strategic partner. The guide is available in [English](#) as well as local Western Balkans languages.

MPI releases study on the effects of COVID-19 on Migrant Workers

Migration Policy Institute Europe (MPI) has recently published a new [study](#) called "Taking the Long View: Options for Inclusive Post-Pandemic Labour Markets". This study explores how the pandemic has affected migrant workers thus far and how labour market trends may affect migrant integration as European economies begin to recover. MPI Europe formulates suggestions for policymakers to protect and advance migrants' economic inclusion in a context of labour market transformation. Previous reports in the Integration Futures series can be found [here](#).

New ATR published on Anti-Trafficking Education

GAATW has published a new issue of the Anti-Trafficking Review (ATR) with the topic of 'Anti-Trafficking Education'. Although this issue has a more academic approach, it includes some more practitioner-oriented pieces about peer study groups, trainings for healthcare providers, and the inclusion of survivors in anti-trafficking training. The complete issue is freely accessible [here](#). A related webinar to discuss how education on trafficking can be linked to political education of workers and other social justice movements will take place on Tuesday, 28 September at 4 PM CET. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

Events

28 September 2021 - at 4 PM CET. GAATW launch of latest ATR issue on 'Anti-Trafficking Education'. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

28 September, 16:00 CET Global Modern Slavery Directory: Launch of the new website. GMSD will launch the revised site and the resources available, but also share knowledge they have gleaned from the GMSD over the last seven years. Register [here](#).

29 September, 15:45 BST - Webinar: Child Labour in the Apparel Sector
This webinar will discuss sector-specific challenges and examine practical actions business can take to address child labour in the apparel sector. Register [here](#).

30 September, 11:30 am - 12:30 pm CEST. Clean Clothes Campaign is organizing a one-hour online discussion to address the fundamental legislative tools and opportunities which the EU must consider to ensure gender equality in the workplace and in textile factories. Register [here](#).

4 October 2021 – 9.30 – 13.00 CET. The INHeRE-consortium organises an online closing seminar presenting the project outcomes, including good-practice tools and trainings for professionals working with migrant victims of sexual violence and trafficking. See programme [here](#) and you can register [here](#).

4 October - 1 November 2021 (5 sessions) 13:00 - 15:00 UTC. The [British Institute of International and Comparative Law](#) (BIICL) provides training that combines research with an applied perspective to enable various stakeholders to gain expert insights and to deepen their knowledge in areas of international law. Register [here](#).

5 October 2021 – 8.00 – 12.00 CET. Animus Association in Bulgaria organises an (online) international closing conference of the Trafficked Women Integration (WIN)

project. The project consortium will present the project outcomes, good practices, and tools to improve the socio-economic integration of third-country-national women victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. You can [register](#) here.

October 7, 10 am – 11 am CET. Knowledge sharing session: Vietnamese migrants in Europe. Jointly organized by Freedom Collaborative, Ban Ying and La Strada International. Please [register](#) for the event.

6-13-20-27 October 2021 - 14.00 – 16.00 CET. PICUM/ETUC and ILO online Webinar Series on ensuring labour rights for undocumented migrant workers? For more info and registration, click [here](#).

14 - 15 October 2021 Berlin, Germany - The German NGO network against human trafficking KOK organizes an international conference to discuss the topic of data collection on trafficking in human beings and exploitation with experts, practitioners and politicians. [See more](#). Register [here](#).

18 October 2021 - 13.00 – 17.15, Bern Switzerland. The Swiss Platform against trafficking in human beings, is organising a live event on labour exploitation and human trafficking in Switzerland. See more [here](#).

On **20 October 18.30 – 20.30** an event is organised by FIZ on human trafficking and asylum. See more [here](#). Both events are part of the Swiss counter trafficking weeks (Sept-Nov) Check [here](#).



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