



Newsletter October

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

Dutch Parliament members requested to take concrete actions against labour exploitation

On September 28, 2021, the Dutch Court of Audit issued a [report](#) (in Dutch) on tackling labour exploitation in the Netherlands with the title, “Perpetrators free, victims not helped.” The conclusions from the report are firm and confirm that the approach to labour exploitation in the Netherlands is failing. In a [joint letter](#) (in Dutch) to the Dutch Parliament, FNV, CoMensha and La Strada International jointly call for concrete actions and a better approach to labour exploitation in the Netherlands – [see more](#)

LSI calls for access to rights and protection for all trafficked persons on Anti-Trafficking Day

On 18 October, European day against Trafficking in Human Beings, La Strada International released a statement, calling for access to rights and protection for all trafficked persons, through adequate implementation of the current legislative framework. LSI supports the efforts for further review of the legislative framework, but recognizes that implementation of legislation is a major bottleneck. LSI therefore calls for: prompt adequate implementation of the current legislative framework; recognition for civil society and its monitoring work and inclusion of workers and trafficked and exploited persons in the assessment of policies and existing legislation. [Read full statement](#)



VATRA joins La Strada International Platform

In September, the [Psycho - Social Centre VATRA](#) joined La Strada International as an associate member. VATRA, is an organization established in 1999 in Albania and has for long cooperated with several LSI members. The LSI Platform now comprises 30 members in 24 European countries. [See more](#)

KOK seminar on data collection on human trafficking and exploitation

On 14-15 October, KOK organised an international seminar to discuss data collection on trafficking in human beings. Prior to the event, the German Network published its [second report](#) on data collection, which contains an initial evaluation of the KOK data tool with data over 700 cases of human trafficking and exploitation. [Read more](#)

Animus hosted webinar on labour integration of female trafficking victims

On 5th October, Animus Association hosted the online conference “Labour Integration of Women Victims of Trafficking from Third Countries - Tackling Multiple Vulnerabilities”, organised in the framework of the ‘WIN’ project. See the [recording](#) of the event.

MRCI joins call for inclusive regularisation scheme

MRCI joined a coalition of 26 organizations which submitted an [open letter](#) to the Irish Minister of Justice regarding the approval of a regularisation scheme that should allow undocumented people in Ireland to apply for a legal status. The coalition asks the regulation scheme to be as broad and inclusive as possible.

CSO coalition demands mandatory due diligence UK law

In the UK, a coalition of civil society organisations including Anti-Slavery International (ASI) and Focus on Labour Exploitation (FLEX) is calling for the introduction a new 'mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence law'. For more information, click [here](#)

What is going on?



ECtHR rules Azerbaijan to compensate Bosnian injured workers

On October 7, the European Court of Human Rights issued a long-awaited verdict in the case of *Zoletic and Others v. Azerbaijan* (20116/12), in favour of 33 citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who were forced to work in Azerbaijan. The court ruled that Azerbaijan failed to comply with its procedural obligation to institute and conduct an effective investigation of the applicants' claims concerning the alleged forced labour and human trafficking. All injured workers have been awarded compensation for non-pecuniary damage of 5,000 euros. [See more](#)

United Nations to adopt new Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons

A high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the appraisal of the UN Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons will be held from **22 to 23 November 2021** in New York. Representatives of NGOs with ECOSOC status can [request](#) to participate. Earlier in July this year, LSI provided input to the consultations for the new Global Action Plan.

[See more](#)

CJEU advises EU to take more time to reach agreement on Istanbul Convention

The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) published its [opinion 1/19](#) on EU accession/ratification to the [Istanbul convention](#), the Council of Europe treaty on violence against women and domestic violence. Regrettably the opinion does not give a clear direction to the EU, to overcome the political blockage for the [ratification of the Istanbul Convention](#). According to the opinion, the Council can take additional time to achieve greater political support among member states but cannot make “common accord” a prerequisite for a decision on accession, which should be made based on a qualified majority. [See more](#)

OHCHR calls for input on the right of children

The UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner is calling for input on two matters: the first one concerning [the annual thematic report on a practical approach to addressing the sale and sexual exploitation of children](#) (deadline 10 November) and the second one about [the rights of the child and family reunification](#) (deadline 31 October).

What is new?

Evaluation Employers Sanctions Directive

The European Commission (EC) has recently published a [communication](#) on its evaluation of the implementation of the Employer’s Sanctions Directive. In this document, the EC elaborates on findings and recommendations for governments to improve implementations of the Directive, including access to information, justice and remuneration, and temporary residence permits for undocumented workers. [See more](#)

EP publishes study on European cross-border associations and non-profits

The official think tank of the European Parliament, DG European Parliament Research Service has recently published a [study](#) on the statute of European cross-border associations and non-profit organizations.

This assessment reviews the current situation of non-political organisations (NPOs) in the EU and the challenges that limit their development across national borders. It then proceeds to identify avenues for EU action, including specific policy options.

Suing Goliath



Suing Goliath: An analysis of civil cases against EU companies for overseas human rights and environmental abuses

The NGO European Coalition for Corporate Justice has published a [report](#) that looks at 22 major recent civil cases against EU companies, and identifies serious and systemic barriers to justice preventing victims of business-related abuses from accessing judicial remedy.

Understanding exploitation risks for migrant workers in the UK during Covid-19

[This report](#) by Nottingham Rights Lab explores the experiences and impact of Covid-19 on Romanian and Bulgarian migrant workers in the UK (particularly seasonal workers) and proposes policy recommendations for the UK Government, Enforcement Agencies, employers, media and trade unions.

A21's 2020 Impact Report: The Implications of COVID-19 on Human Trafficking

A new [report](#) by the organisation A21 highlights the various ways how COVID-19 impacted human trafficking trends, resource development and service provision in 2020, as experienced first-hand by A21 through their offices around the world. The report illustrates how A21 responded to challenges posed by the pandemic by shifting strategy, adapting programs, and creating new initiatives to ensure the continuation of our mission to end the cycle of human trafficking everywhere we work.

A Toolkit for Enhancing Counseling for Victims of Gender-Based Violence

The European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control (HEUNI) released a toolkit to empower counsellors and beneficiaries to assess the needs and the impact of counselling

with women in migration. The concept of this [toolkit](#) emerged from the desire of the partner organisations' counsellors to incorporate to the counseling different ways to ensure that women in migration who have experienced gender-based violence are heard. The toolkit can be used to improve the quality and impact of counseling.

GI-TOC presents the 2021 Global Organized Crime Index

GI-TOC (Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime) has launched the [2021 Global Organized Crime Index](#), to evaluate levels of crime and resilience in all 193 UN member states. The Index shines a light on the ubiquity of some of the most insidious forms of exploitation that are perpetrated by criminal actors all over the world. Additionally, it illustrates the widespread shortcomings in global levels of resilience to organized crime, from weaknesses in criminal justice systems to rampant corruption and violent crackdowns on the freedom of the press and civil society. It further highlights the adaptability of organized crime to the pandemic. In the face of lockdowns and travel restrictions, criminals not only retooled their regular business, but also exploited new opportunities presented by the global health crisis.

CoE publishes Action Plan on Protecting Vulnerable Persons

The Council of Europe has released the [Action Plan on Protecting Vulnerable Persons in the Context of Migration and Asylum in Europe 2021-2025](#), which aims at addressing the main challenges and opportunities identified after the previous action plan, focusing on children, was completed in 2019. This new action plan proposes targeted measures and activities to enhance the capacity of member states to identify and address vulnerabilities throughout asylum and migration procedures. The action plan is composed of four pillars: three of them based on the core mandate of the Council of Europe – human rights, democracy and the rule of law – and a fourth transversal pillar focusing on co-operation.

Blogs

Perpetrators free, victims not helped

On September 28, 2021, the Netherlands Court of Audits reported that perpetrators of labour exploitation in the Netherlands often go unpunished and victims are rarely provided with properly help and support. The main conclusion of the report 'Perpetrators free, victims not helped' is that despite the increase in the number of inspectors, enforcement

efforts in the Netherlands remain ineffective. This conclusion confirms what FNV encounters on daily basis. In this blog a reaction is given on the report. [Read full blog post](#)

PICUM: The new EU action plan against migrant smuggling is failing migrants

PICUM, of which LSI is a member, offers an insight of the [renewed EU action plan against migrant smuggling \(2021-2025\)](#), and explains how it could affect migrant's rights. [Read full blog](#)

Event updates

27 October 12.00 – 13.15 CEST – ‘Time to Strengthen the Anti-Trafficking Directive: How can a revised Directive better protect ALL children at risk of trafficking, including those vulnerable to the phenomenon of institution-related trafficking?’ Register [here](#).

5 November 2021 - FAWCO Human Rights in Focus virtual event on human trafficking. LSI invited to speak. Register [here](#).

11 November 9.30 -13.00 PM - Public Policy Exchange will be hosting a webinar on Combating Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery: Developing a Stronger Multi-Agency Response for the Identification of and Support for Victims of Trafficking with a contribution by LSI's member FLEX.

22-23 November - High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Appraisal of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons - New York, United Nations Headquarters

22 – 24 November (2-4 PM UK time) – online lectures ‘Combating Human Trafficking & Modern-day Slavery: A legal approach to fighting for victims' rights and justice' given by well-known barrister Parosha Chandran. You can register [here](#).

29 November to 1 December 2021, UN Forum on Business and Human Rights
The [concept note](#) for this year event and further information is available on the [Forum website](#).

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