

Newsletter January 2022

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 International news

Looking back at our work in 2021

In 2021 La Strada International actively monitored and promoted the effective implementation of European Anti-Trafficking policies and the legislative and operational framework to ensure better protection of trafficked person's rights in Europe. A total of 41 network meetings were conducted and a total of around 50 online European events have been attended, next to organising webinars and side events.

Regardless ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, several thousand persons were assisted by LSI members in 2021, through helpline and social support services including counseling and legal and other assistance. Many more victims and vulnerable groups were reached through awareness and outreach programmes. LSI further contributed to building evidence and worked on data collection, monitoring and various research projects, which was aligned with ongoing advocacy work. See [more](#).

La Strada Members news



ASI calls for binding legislation to address human rights abuses in supply chains

As many of the products that we use daily depend on forced labour, Anti-Slavery International (ASI) calls on the UK government to introduce a Business, Human Rights and Environment Act, to address human rights abuses in supply chains. Read more [here](#).

FLEX responds to UK review of first year of seasonal workers' pilot

In December 2021, the UK Government published the [review of the first year of the Seasonal Workers Pilot \(2019\)](#). Our member FLEX has [responded](#) to the review, based on own [research](#) on the experiences of workers on the scheme. See full response [here](#).

VATRA publishes study on Albanian legal anti trafficking framework

A new [study](#) by VATRA reviews the compliance of the Albanian legislative framework with EU legislation in the area of combating human trafficking. VATRA's ongoing advocacy for a comprehensive national legal framework to strengthen the protection system for victims of trafficking has paid off: the new Albanian national action plan includes the intention to improve the national legislation.

What is happening?

Spanish authorities sued after death of a trafficking victim in Spain

The death of a trafficked person, called Lili, who died in 2019 after suffering years of sexual exploitation and violence by a trafficking network in Spain, has led to a [legal case](#) against the Spanish authorities. Women's Link Worldwide, on behalf of Fundació Àmbit Prevençió, GENERA and the Asociación Putes Indignades have sued the administrations, that according to them failed to protect her. Lili refused to cooperate and report her traffickers and did apparently not receive assistance, while her situation was known to police forces and the Barcelona Prosecutor's Office. See [more](#).

French government will push for further ratification of the Istanbul Convention

France has [announced](#) that women rights and gender equality are among the [priority areas](#) for their EU presidency, which includes the promotion of the ratification of the [Istanbul Convention](#). La Strada International and its members have been calling up the European Commission to urge EU Member States to ratify the Convention and the EU itself to accede to the Istanbul Convention. During the presidency, France will also negotiate with

the European Parliament on two important proposed directives on fair minimum wages in the EU and on the protection of platform workers, which will both support the protection of workers. See [more](#).

Important note; today the Republic of Moldova [ratified](#) the Istanbul Convention



Eighteen people convicted related to the Essex Tragedy

The head of the people smuggler gang, responsible for the deaths of 39 Vietnamese in 2019 in the English county of Essex, is convicted to 15 years in prison and a fine of 920,000 Euro. In this landmark judgment by the Belgium court, it was further ruled that damages should be paid to the families of a number of victims. Lawyer Luc Arnou, who spoke for the victims and on behalf of LSI's member PAG-Asa expressed his satisfaction with the verdict. See [more](#).

UN Special Rapporteurs react jointly on 'Linglong case'

On 21 January, several UN Special Rapporteurs, including the Rapporteurs on Slavery and Trafficking issued a [statement](#) on the allegations of forced labour of around 500 Vietnamese people, who were recruited to work for the Chinese-owned Linglong Tire factory construction site in Serbia. Earlier also the European Parliament adopted a [resolution](#) related to the 'Linglong case'. LSI's member ASTRA in Serbia continues to raise awareness about the case and the appalling conditions of the Vietnamese workers. See [more](#).

UNSR on Slavery calls for input for next report

The UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery launched a call for contributions for his next report on the victimisation of people belonging to ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, communities discriminated on work and descent as well as migrant workers in contemporary forms of slavery. See more [information](#).



Dutch trade union and retailers aim to tackle exploitation in Italian tomato cultivation

Dutch association of retailers, together with the FNV trade union, want to tackle harrowing working conditions in Italian tomato cultivation. [Research](#) conducted by FNV and the Dutch Central Bureau for Food Trade (CBL) shows that exploitation and irregular labour are common in the sector. See [more](#).

EESC works on opinion on EU action plan against migrant smuggling

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) is working on an opinion on a [renewed EU action plan against migrant smuggling \(2021-2025\)](#). On 4 February an Public Hearing at the EU Parliament is planned to discuss the EU action plan and to gather input from other EU Institutions, civil society organisations and other stakeholders, which will feed into the EESC's opinion. See [more](#). LSI and PICUM have earlier raised awareness that legislation and measures adopted to fight migrant smuggling should be monitored for its impact on the rights of migrants and trafficked persons, and not be used against migrants themselves nor people defending their rights.

What's new?

Second report on Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

On 24th of January the Secretary-General's published its [second biennial report](#) on the UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), which contains a call upon States to take concerted action to truly foster the rights, dignity and well-being of migrants. See [more](#).

ODIHR launches revised NRM handbook

On 25th of January, after a lengthy process of about 4 years - the revised ODIHR [NRM handbook](#) was launched. This handbook should provide guidance to OSCE participating States on establishing and strengthening national referral mechanisms (NRMs). See [more](#).

Analysis of Migration and Policy trends for 2022

ICMPD's Migration Outlook presents a brief analysis of migration and policy trends and provides an outlook on developments and events to watch out for in 2022. [Download the ICMPD Migration Outlook 2022.](#)

Commentary on Serbian bill on Seasonal and Other Occasional Employment

The American Bar Association Center for Human Rights published a [Commentary](#) on the impact of the Serbian draft law on Seasonal and Other Occasional Employment in Specific Business Activities, which is predicted to be adopted in the first half of 2022. According to the Bar Association the bill is inconsistent with provisions of the Serbian Constitution and with Serbia's international human rights commitments, such as the ILO conventions which Serbia has ratified.



New online HELP course on Violence Against Women for Law Enforcement

GREVIO published a new free Council of Europe HELP [online course](#) on Violence Against Women for Law Enforcement Professionals and other first line professionals. The course can be accessed by visiting the Council of Europe HELP online platform at: <http://help.elearning.ext.coe.int/> See [more](#).

Upcoming events

- **4 February 2022** - The European Economic and Social Committee is working on an opinion on [A renewed EU action plan against migrant smuggling \(2021-2025\)](#), and organised a related (online) event.
- **9 February 2022** 3-4:30 PM CET – Webinar Ethics and journalism: Reporting human trafficking responsibly, organised by Journalismfund.eu, which will discuss

ethical guidelines for journalists when reporting on victims and survivors of human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and labour abuse.

- **16 February 2022** - 10 – 11.30 NY time (16.00 – 17.30 CET) briefing on the [Secretary-General's second biennial report on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration \(GCM\)](#). There will be a live webcast on [UN Web TV](#)
- **21 – 25 February 2022** – OECD Forum on Due Diligence in the Garment and Footwear Sector- see more <https://oecd-events.org/garment>
- **22 March 2022** – On 14 December, the Commission launched a 3rd public [consultation](#) for the evaluation of the THB Directive, which is open until 22 March 2021.
- **4 - 6 April 2022** – The OSCE will organise the 22nd High-Level Alliance against Trafficking in Persons Conference. The topic of this year's conference will focus on protection and assistance – and specifically the application of a victim-centered approach to support victims of trafficking in human beings and uphold their rights.

Support La Strada's work

La Strada International is dependent on donations and subsidies. If you want to support La Strada's work financially, click [here](#). By making a gift, you will help us to continue our monitoring and advocacy work to ensure accountability for the effective implementation of European Anti-Trafficking policies and regulations and the support to trafficked persons



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