

## NEWSLETTER APRIL 2023

### LSI NEWS

#### La Strada International's representation in April

In April, La Strada International participated in the High Level meeting of the [EU Victim Rights Platform](#); the [23rd OSCE Conference of the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons](#) and the Alliance Expert Team meeting. On 25 April, LSI moderated the [Webinar on protecting trafficking victims from immigration detention](#) organised by the Global Detention Project, and on 26-28 April, LSI will contribute to the UNODC conference 'Improving response to trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual exploitation, especially women and girls through addressing demand in the South-Eastern Europe'.



### LSI MEMBERS NEWS

#### Trafficking from Latin American countries to Poland

In 2022, more than 150 people from Latin American countries approached La Strada Poland for support. Their stories were almost identical: they came to Poland through Polish recruitment agencies who promised them work but upon arrival, there was no work, no place to stay, and no income, just debts. The agencies that are recruiting people - from Guatemala, Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela, and other countries - are still operating and bringing in new people with false promises. A new investigation by a Polish journalist uncovered dozens of Latin American victims of trafficking and forced labour. Three of them spoke to him about their ordeal. See [more](#) (in Polish).

#### La Strada Ukraine and Animus Association campaign against domestic violence

La Strada Ukraine launched a PR campaign titled "There is a way out!". It is implemented with the support of a well-known Ukrainian celebrity Darya Tregubova. The campaign aims to show that women in a situation of domestic violence can receive help and get out of their situation. The campaign offers concrete actions for women who are experiencing domestic violence. See [more](#).

Also, Animus Association in Bulgaria has been calling for stronger state protection of victims of domestic violence in Bulgaria, in particular after a woman assisted by the organisation was murdered by her male partner this month. See [more](#).

- ASTRA published a report that summarises the data and conclusions from the running of the 116000 hotline for missing children in Serbia from the past ten years. See [more](#).
- From 18 to 31 March, the Philippine embassy in Germany hosted an exhibition titled “For Juana: Stories and portraits of migrants in Germany”. The exhibition consisted of paintings by Krisanta Caguioa-Moennich, language and cultural mediator at Ban Ying. See more about the exhibition [here](#) and see the paintings on Krisanta’s [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).
- The Director of CoMensha/La Strada Netherlands, Ms Ina Hut, is leaving the organisation from 30 April. She will be succeeded by Mr Victor Jammers. We wish Ina successes with her new endeavour. See [more](#).

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## WHAT IS HAPPENING?

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### Ten years since the Rana Plaza disaster

On 24 April 2013, the Rana Plaza garment factories in Bangladesh collapsed, killing more than 1,100 people, most of them women, and injuring 2,500 others. Since then, businesses, governments, trade unions, and NGOs have worked together to develop new safety standards for garment factories. Despite these important steps, there is much more work to be done to ensure the safety and wellbeing of garment sector workers. See [more](#).

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### UN expert calls on EU to strengthen Due Diligence Directive

The UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking, Siobhán Mullally has called on the EU to strengthen the proposed Directive on corporate sustainability due diligence to include an effective accountability mechanism for prevention of trafficking in persons and ensure effective access to justice and compensation for victims. See [more](#). Yesterday on 25<sup>th</sup> of April, the EU Committee on Legal Affairs adopted the proposal for the Due Diligence Directive.

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### UN Rapporteurs call upon UK to protect unaccompanied children

The UN Special Rapporteurs on trafficking in persons, on the human rights of migrants, and on contemporary forms of slavery issued a joint statement urging the UK to ensure the protection of all children seeking asylum without discrimination and put an end to the practice of placing unaccompanied children in hotels. See [more](#).

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### UNTOC review mechanism delayed, no public findings yet

The Secretariat of the UNTOC Review Mechanism informed La Strada International that there is a delay in the review process. Thus, the first cluster (for which the reviews were to be finalised by the end of 2022) is “still in progress and no reviews have been finalised”. See [more](#).

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### Proposal for revision EU Victim Rights Directive expected in June

It is expected that the proposal for the revision of the EU Victim Rights Directive will be presented in a few weeks by the end of June. Most likely, it will not be a full reopening of the Directive, but – similar to the revision of the EU Anti Trafficking Directive - the Commission intends to only open some selected articles of the Directive for revision. The revision should strengthen victim rights and proposed amendments are expected to ensure more attention for the situation of (specific groups of) vulnerable victims and enhance reporting on crime; access to justice for victims including access to compensation, as well as improve data to be collected on victims’ rights.



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## Special commission on trafficking and smuggling set up in Belgium

In 2022, the Belgian Parliament set up a Special Commission to review the fight against human trafficking and migrant smuggling. The Commission will submit a report this year, the conclusions and recommendations of which will be voted on in Parliament. LSI's member Pag-Asa who participated in two hearings and supports the preliminary report of the Commission, emphasised among others the need for more meaningful support to victims, including by ensuring more shelters and counselling centres.

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## Campaign against EU's use of AI in migration and border controls

A new campaign #ProtectNotSurveil is calling on EU institutions and EU MS to ensure that the Artificial Intelligence Act protects the rights of all people, including migrants. See [more](#).

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## Unions: G20 Labour Ministers must address the needs of working people

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) is calling on G20 Labour Ministers to alleviate the issues faced by workers worldwide. Ahead of the G20 Summit in India this year, ITUC calls on states to adopt measures that will increase wages and access to social protections and ensure that all workers, including platform workers, benefit from the ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. States should also invest in reskilling workers whose jobs are being transformed by new technologies. Read the full statement [here](#).

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## WHAT IS NEW

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## New project to investigate role of financial markets in modern slavery

A [new research project](#) of the Modern Slavery Policy & Evidence Centre and others will focus on the role of investment from local, regional or global markets in addressing the risks of modern slavery. This multi-stakeholder initiative aims to mobilise the financial sector against modern slavery and human trafficking.

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## The impact of platformisation of sex work

A new paper by the European Sex Workers Rights Alliance explores the intersecting issues of sex work and digital rights. The paper, titled [Conditions, Control and Consent: Exploring the impact of platformisation of sex work](#), examines the process and impact of platformisation on the working conditions of sex workers while highlighting the close-knit relationship between sex workers and the gig economy. It argues that adult sexual service platforms need to adopt policies that improve the working conditions of sex workers. It also refers to recent efforts by the EU to regulate platform work and how the lack of recognition of sex work as work excludes sex workers from labour protections.

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## Media and public opinion towards refugees

[A new Migration Research Series paper](#) analyses the role of the media in shaping public opinion of refugees in Europe. It does so through two case studies: the current Ukrainian displacement and the 2015 refugee “crisis”, related to the arrival of Syrian refugees. The paper applies a combination of sentiment analysis and qualitative thematic analysis to explore how media discourses have shaped the narrative around these two migration flows. It also explores the perception that race has played an outsized influence in the policy responses to the two situations.

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## Low pay causing labour shortages

Europe’s record labour shortages are being driven by low wages and working conditions, according to new research. The study, [Labour shortages – turning away from bad jobs](#), by the European Trade Union Institute, shows that between 2019 and 2022, labour shortages increased primarily in sectors and jobs that pay low wages and offer relatively poor working conditions. The findings point to the need to increase collective bargaining and raise pay and working conditions, as well as skills, if Europe is going to end its labour shortage.

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## Violence against women and girls in the UK: A snapshot report

[This report](#) by the End Violence Against Women Coalition sets out the state of violence against women and girls (VAWG) in the UK. It draws on the latest statistics, research, and insight from specialist VAWG organisations and researchers to spotlight the pervasiveness of VAWG. It analyses VAWG within the context of the past year’s slow post-pandemic recovery, political instability, and the cost-of-living crisis. It concludes with recommendations to the UK government to address all forms of violence.

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## Blog: The EU needs a new approach to meet its migration goals

A new op-ed by academics from the European University Institute argues that the EU needs to develop three approaches to meet the migration challenges in the Mediterranean instead of relying on old tools that are no longer effective: regional partnerships; harmonisation and coherence of approach, and involving cities and local authorities on both sides of the Mediterranean. See [more](#).

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## Trafficked: The woman who took on her traffickers and won

*The Guardian* has released a new podcast that highlights the story of a Ukrainian survivor of trafficking in the UK. The exclusive four-part series charts the woman’s journey from her life as a young mother in Ukraine into modern slavery in the UK. And how she fought to bring her traffickers to justice. You can find the series [here](#).

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

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- **9 May 2023** – Online conference “Fostering Transnational Cooperation in the Fight against Trafficking”, organised by TIATAS project. Register [here](#).
- **9-10 May 2023** – Conference “Uncovering Vulnerabilities in Migration and Human Trafficking”, organised within the H2020 CRiTERIA project, Valletta, Malta. See more on the [project](#).
- **5-6 June 2023** – Seminar “Reducing Demand and Preventing Trafficking in Human Beings”, organised by ERA, Krakow, Poland. See more information [here](#).
- **7-9 June 2023** - [Victim Support Europe Annual Conference 2023](#) titled “Protecting fundamental freedoms, a victim’s perspective” hosted by [WEISSER RING e.V.](#), Berlin, Germany.

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## Support us

La Strada International is fully dependent on donations and subsidies. By making a [donation](#), 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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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](#).



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