

## NEWSLETTER JUNE 2023

### LSI NEWS

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

On 5 - 6 June 2023, LSI and LS Poland contributed to the [ERA seminar](#) on reducing demand for human trafficking in Krakow, Poland. See [presentation](#) by LSI's International Coordinator. On 8-9 June, LSI participated in the final conference of the VULNER project in Brussels, Belgium. See recording of the [panel event](#) and the project's new [discussion paper](#). LSI and several members also participated in PICUM's General Assembly and Victim Support Europe's annual meeting (members only).

### LSI MEMBERS NEWS



**FIZ staff join feminist strike**

On 14 June, the staff of FIZ joined the Switzerland-wide feminist strike. The strike marks the date when, in 1981, voters approved a constitutional amendment that guaranteed equality between women and men. See [more](#).

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## LSI members mark World Refugee Day

Throughout June, On the Road in Italy organised the second edition of its [Terra Madre Festival](#) to mark World Refugee Day on 20 June. The Festival opened on 11 June with the artistic exhibition [Femininity Knows No Boundaries](#), which presented artworks by women who have been supported by the organisation.

Migrant Rights Centre Ireland also marked World Refugee Day with a protest in Dublin against the violence at EU borders and to remember all those who lost their lives seeking safety. On the same day, Open Gate/La Strada North Macedonia took part in a table tennis tournament for asylum seekers organised by UNHCR-Skopje.

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## Bulgaria needs to strengthen responses to gender-based violence

On 15 June, Animus Association/La Strada Bulgaria organised a high-level round table to discuss measures to address gender-based violence and domestic violence in the country. See [more](#).

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## Training on investigation and prosecution of online child sexual exploitation in Moldova

On 12-16 June, La Strada Moldova provided training to more than 20 investigators, prosecutors, and forensic experts on the topic of online child sexual exploitation. The training was supported by the US Embassy and featured experts from the US, Switzerland, Ireland, and UK. Topics included the international legal framework, global and national contexts and types of crimes, profiles, modus operandi, investigation and prosecution of abusers, and support to victims.

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## WHAT IS HAPPENING?

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## EU accedes to Istanbul Convention

On 28 June, the EU's accession to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence ([CETS 210](#)) was formalised. The Convention will enter into force as regards the European Union on 1 October 2023. The EU is the 38th Party of the Convention. See [more](#). On 29 June, the FEMM and LIBE Committees of the European Parliament overwhelmingly backed the draft EU Directive on Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence. The vote ensures that this vital law will go even further in protecting the rights and safety of women and girls.

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## Second International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council (ISTAC)

On 21 June, OSCE ODIHR held the official inauguration of the second cohort of the [International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council \(ISTAC\)](#). The Council consists of 21 prominent human trafficking survivors from across the OSCE region and provides advice, guidance and recommendations to OSCE participating states on anti-trafficking legislation, policies, practices, and training.

LSI is pleased to see in the Council several people who were supported by our members: Marko Tamindžija (Bosnia and Herzegovina), supported by ASTRA, Zita Cabais (France), supported by CCEM, and Mariaam Bhatti (Ireland), supported by MRCI. Zita and Mariaam were both re-elected. See [more](#).

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## EU Council settles on negotiating positions on migration, anti-trafficking, and labour laws

The EU Council settled on its [negotiating position](#) for the revision of the Anti-Trafficking Directive. The Council's position differs slightly from the Commission's initial proposal with respect to several issues. See [more](#). The FEMM and LIBE committees in the EU Parliament are still working on their position. On 20 June MEPs sent in amendments to the EP draft report. MEPs of both committees will now discuss the amendments and vote on the EP report in September. In October, a plenary parliament vote is foreseen.

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## FEMM Committee votes for Prostitution Report

On 27 June, the Women's Rights (FEMM) Committee of the European Parliament voted in favour of the report *Regulation of prostitution in the EU: its cross-border implications and impact on gender equality and women's rights*. La Strada International is concerned by this vote as it is based on flawed data and misinterprets the definition of human trafficking as reflected in the EU Anti-Trafficking Directive. See [more](#).

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## UN Human Rights Council session

The 53<sup>rd</sup> session of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) is taking place from 19 June to 14 July in Geneva. The President of HRC has [recommended](#) Dr Anna Triandafyllidou (Greece) for the

mandate of UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants. LSI has worked with Dr Triandafyllidou and congratulates her for this high recognition of her expertise and commitment to human rights.

The Council will hear presentations of several reports relevant to LSI and our members' work: Report of the working group on the Universal Periodic Reviews of [Czechia](#) and [Switzerland](#); [Report of the Working Group on human rights and transnational corporations – visit to Luxembourg](#); reports of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants – [visit to Poland](#), [visit to Belarus](#), and thematic report on [how to expand and diversify regularisation mechanisms and programmes](#); report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights on the [employment guarantee as a tool in the fight against poverty](#); and report of the UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons on [trafficking in persons and international protection](#), which was presented at a side event on 27 June.

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## EU Parliament votes on draft Corporate Due Diligence Directive

On 31 May, the European Parliament voted in favour of legislation that would require EU companies to risk-assess and prevent harm to human rights in their global value chains. The Parliament's position clarifies how companies can address harm and work with people who may be affected by company activities. It also lowers hurdles to access to justice for victims by extending the statute of limitations on corporate abuse cases and offering financial and legal assistance to victims. However, the Parliament failed to reverse the burden of proof, meaning a major barrier to justice remains. See [more](#).

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## GRETA 2022 annual report and new country reports

GRETA published its [annual report for 2022](#) which provides an overview of its activities in preventing and combating human trafficking throughout the year. The report also discusses the 2022 [Recommendation](#) by the Committee of the Ministers on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation, which is now also [translated](#) in several languages. In June, GRETA also published its third reports on [Azerbaijan](#), [Estonia](#), [Poland](#), [Serbia](#), [Slovenia](#), and [Spain](#).

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## Nominations for PILnet's Global Awards open

[PILnet's Global Awards](#) recognise the best local and global pro bono legal projects. PILnet is now collecting video submissions for the Global Awards. See how to submit a nomination [here](#).

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## OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises

Ministers of the members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) adopted the newly updated [Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct](#). The updated Guidelines strengthen global standards on responsible business conduct related to, among others, meaningful stakeholder engagement, environmental impact, and the rights of workers in supply chains. See [this briefing paper](#) by the NGO OECD Watch.

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**WHAT IS NEW**

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## US Trafficking in Persons Report 2023

The US State Department published the [2023 Trafficking in Persons report](#). The report shows an increase in the number of identified victims, as well as prosecutions and convictions of traffickers compared to the previous year but broadly in line with the trend before the COVID-19 pandemic. There was no change in the tier placement of LSI countries compared to 2022. See [more](#).

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## PICUM's input on the application of EU Directive 2016/801 concerning au pairs

On the occasion of International Domestic Workers Day, 16 June, PICUM published [a paper](#) on the situation of au pairs in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and Luxembourg. It sets out a number of key issues that PICUM considers a priority to address in the European Commission report on the application of Directive 2016/801, which regulates the entry and residence rules for different categories of non-EU citizens, including au pairs. The paper is based on a survey of PICUM members, including LSI members KOK (Germany) and FairWork (the Netherlands) and additional desk research.

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## FRA Fundamental Rights Report 2023

The EU Fundamental Rights Agency's [Fundamental Rights Report 2023](#) reviews major developments in the field in 2022, identifying achievements and areas of concern. It also presents FRA's opinions on these developments, including a synopsis of the evidence supporting these opinions. The focus chapter looks at the fundamental rights implications for the EU of the war in Ukraine. It identifies challenges and solutions for all aspects covered by the Temporary Protection Directive and by EU laws on human trafficking, hate crime, and the rights of crime victims.

FRA also launched a new version of its [European Union Fundamental Rights Information System – EFRIS](#), with enhancements including an AI-enhanced search function. EFRIS brings together and visualises information on international human rights commitments and compliance of the 27 EU Member States, and Albania, North Macedonia, and Serbia.

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## Engaging trafficked persons in anti-trafficking work

A new feature series on Beyond Trafficking and Slavery (BTS) explores the intricacies of trafficked persons' engagement in anti-trafficking work. Borislav Gerasimov from GAATW [outlines](#) the different ways in which GAATW members (including some LSI members) involve trafficked persons in policy and programme development. There is also an [interview](#) with Katia Krastanova from our Bulgarian member Animus Association who discusses the work that goes into preparing

trafficked persons to speak with the media and what ethical representation of trafficked persons in the media should look like. See the entire series [here](#).

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## Linking migrant reintegration assistance and development goals

It is now recognised that migrants' experiences of reintegration in origin countries are contingent on the level of country development, particularly, the availability of economic opportunities and public services. Yet, reintegration and development actors have traditionally operated in separate silos. [This issue brief](#), published by Migration Policy Institute (MPI), argues for closer links between migration and development policies and institutions. It maps existing approaches to connecting migration and development goals and their limitations. It also outlines measures that could help future policies and programmes overcome common hurdles.

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## New e-learning tools

The Academy of European Law has published several practice-oriented trainings on measures to enhance investigations and prosecutions, disrupt the financial business model and intensify preventive measures to combat human trafficking. These can be found [here](#).

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## ICAT webinars

Between June and November 2023, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT) will organise six webinars to advance discussions on trafficking in persons data collection and research. See [more](#).

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

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- **3 - 6 July 2023** – 20th IMISCOE Annual Conference, “Migration and inequalities. In search of answers and solutions”, Warsaw and online. See [more](#).
  - **30 July 2023** – World Day against Trafficking in Persons. See [more](#).
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## Support us

La Strada International is fully dependent on donations and subsidies. By making a [donation](#), you will help us continue our monitoring and advocacy work to ensure accountability for the effective implementation of European anti-trafficking policies 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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