

NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2023

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](#).

LSI NEWS



LSI's contribution to international events

- On **2–4 October**, LSI and members participated in the “Conference on Protection and Assistance of Trafficked Victims from Nigeria to Europe”. See [more](#).
- On **4 October**, LSI spoke at the [UN Constructive Dialogues](#) for the UNTOC Review Mechanism.
- On **6 October**, LSI contributed to the International Expert Round Table “TIME TO GET REAL – Beyond Awareness Raising and Recommendations” in Vienna with a presentation on [challenges faced by NGOs to support victims of trafficking for labour exploitation](#). See livestream, other presentations and [more](#).
- On **18 October**, a delegation of Ukrainian lawyers, prosecutors and judges visited La Strada International to discuss current and emerging trends and patterns of trafficking in persons related to the war in Ukraine.
- On **19 October**, LSI joined OSCE's workshop in The Hague on assistance to Ukrainian refugees in the Netherlands.
- On **26–27 October**, LSI participated in the [4th meeting of the Council of Europe network of specialised lawyers and NGOs providing legal assistance to victims of human trafficking](#).

LSI statement on EU Anti-Trafficking Day

On 18 October, EU Anti-Trafficking Day, LSI [called](#) upon EU institutions to use the revision of the THB Directive to strengthen victims' rights, commenting on which proposed provisions can advance rights and which may undermine them. LSI also signed a [joint NGO statement](#), which criticised the revision of article 18 of the Directive aiming to criminalise clients of sex workers.

In October, LSI also joined a joint submission to the CoSP10 titled: ["The Right of Victims to Participation and Reparation in Corruption Cases"](#).

LSI MEMBERS NEWS



La Strada Czech awarded for crime prevention

LSI is proud to share that La Strada Czech was awarded in the national round of the European Crime Prevention Award for its work on prevention of trafficking and exploitation of young war refugees. Together with the Interministerial Coordination Group for Combating Trafficking, National Centre for Fight against Organized Crime and IOM, La Strada was also nominated for the European round of the European Crime Prevention Award representing Czechia.

LSI members mark EU Anti-Trafficking Day

LSI members marked EU Anti-Trafficking Day by raising awareness about the issue and the rights of trafficked persons on social and traditional media as well as participating in national events. FIZ took an active part in the Swiss [action week against human trafficking](#). In Belgium, Pag-Asa [organised](#) several film screenings, exhibitions, and community actions. LEFÖ held a workshop at the conference ["Boundaries and Frontiers in Human Trafficking"](#), organised by the Austrian government. SICAR cat [brought attention](#) to the rights of care workers who are at risk of exploitation and abuse in Spain. CoMensha published their [2022 annual report](#) and launched a new campaign ["Your Doubts Are Someone's Chance"](#). Open Gate/La Strada Macedonia released its documentary ["Way Out"](#) for free viewing on YouTube.

Human trafficking data in Germany show weaknesses in access to victims' rights

KOK released its fourth data report on trafficking in human beings and exploitation in Germany, based on data collected by the specialist counselling centres. It provides information on the number and profile of the people the centres assisted as well as to what extent they were afforded their rights. See [more](#).

Stories of exploited Filipinas exhibited in Paris

As part of its upcoming exhibition [East and Southeast Asian Immigration since 1860](#), the French National Museum of the History of Immigration has selected four objects proposed by four Filipino women supported by CCEM. These objects tell their personal story and journey as victims of trafficking for labour exploitation.

CoMensha launches human trafficking podcast

CoMensha launched a ten-part podcast to raise awareness about human trafficking in The Netherlands. In the first four episodes, a former victim speaks about how she was trafficked and her recovery journey. In the next six episodes, various experts speak about their experience in victim protection. You can find the podcast (in Dutch only) [here](#).

WHAT IS HAPPENING?



New EU anti-trafficking campaign

On EU Anti-Trafficking Day, the European Commission launched a new [campaign](#) titled "End Human Trafficking. Break the Invisible Chain". It highlights human trafficking for sexual and labour exploitation and forced begging and that victims are often undetected and invisible. It also provides information where people can report suspected cases. A second phase is currently being developed and will be launched at a later stage. The EU Victim Rights Campaign ["Keep your eyes open"](#) is also still active.

Negotiations of EU legislation

In October, the European Parliament adopted its [position](#) on the revision of the EU Trafficking Directive and negotiations between the different EU institutions are expected to start soon. Trilogues are also ongoing on the [Corporate Due Diligence Directive](#) and the [VAW & DV Directive](#). The EU Parliament Internal Market and International Trade committees further adopted their [position](#) on the proposed Forced Labour Ban. Once the Council finalises its position, negotiations will also start on this regulation. For the [revision of the Victims' Rights Directive](#), negotiations are expected to start only after the EU Parliament election, as the Council and Parliament still need to develop their positions. EP Rapporteurs have recently been appointed.

New Anti-Slavery Commissioner in the UK

On 11 October, the UK Home Secretary [announced](#) the appointment of Eleanor Lyons for the post of Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner. Ms Lyons will take up the post, which had been vacant for 18 months, on 11 December. The opposition Labour Party [questioned](#) whether she has enough experience for this position and suspected that she would not be critical of the government's policies, particularly in the areas of migration.

EU Council agrees on negotiating position on EU law dealing with crisis situations

The EU Council reached an [agreement](#) on the final component of a common European asylum and migration policy before it begins negotiations with the Parliament. The new rules will allow frontline states to fast-track asylum applications and move people swiftly to other EU member states. There will also be an accelerated registration process for asylum seekers in a crisis situation, giving member states just four weeks to do the initial paperwork before asking other countries to accommodate people. However, [according to PICUM](#), the Council proposals will result in more detention, quicker deportations, and criminalisation of help.

Global Commission on modern slavery and human trafficking

On 5 October, the former UK Prime Minister Theresa May [launched](#) the Global Commission on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. The initiative will aim to restore political momentum on eradicating slavery, trafficking and forced labour. The Commission comprises current and former political leaders, academics, practitioners, and former trafficked persons. See [more](#).

Norway ratifies ILO Convention C190

On 6 October, Norway became the 33rd country to ratify ILO Convention C190 on ending violence and harassment in the world of work. The Convention provides the first internationally agreed definition of violence and harassment in the world of work, including of gender-based violence. It requires States to adopt an inclusive, integrated and gender-responsive approach to preventing and eliminating violence and harassment, through prevention, protection and enforcement measures and remedies, as well as guidance, training and awareness-raising. See [more](#).

UK Government lays legislation to scrap the Family Worker Exemption

The UK government has taken measures to scrap an exemption from National Minimum Wage regulations. The "Family Worker Exemption" allowed employers to avoid paying the national minimum wage, or any wage at all, to their live-in domestic and childcare workers, if the worker is "treated as a member of the family". See [more](#).

Scottish companies to be held accountable for human rights abuses anywhere

In September, the Scottish Court of Session ruled that a legal case against a Scottish company, relating to working practices in Kenya, can be heard by a Scottish court. The ruling means that Scottish courts have jurisdiction to hear cases on alleged human rights harms by Scottish companies regardless of whether the harms took place abroad. See [more](#).

WHAT IS NEW



New *Anti-Trafficking Review* call for papers

Anti-Trafficking Review published a new call for papers for a special issue themed “Family and Community”. The aim of this issue will be to explore the experiences and needs of family members of migrants and trafficked persons as well as different family dynamics in the context of migration and trafficking. The deadline for submissions is 1 July 2024. See [more](#).

Civil society still under threat but awareness growing

Civil society organisations in the EU are still facing threats, due to laws, lack of funding and limited access to decision-making. But the latest findings from the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) also reveal growing awareness and support to enable civil society to better promote human rights and democracy. See [report](#).

New UN Guidance on human trafficking statistics

IOM and UNODC published the first [global technical guidance](#) for administrative data on trafficking in persons. It will support governments to collect and analyse high-quality, internationally comparable data, which can be used to enhance the evidence base for anti-trafficking responses.

GRETA publishes new reports on Sweden and Iceland

In October, GRETA published new 3rd round monitoring reports on [Sweden](#) and [Iceland](#). Both countries are urged to take further steps to improve the identification of victims of trafficking, including child victims, and among asylum seekers. GRETA also raised concern about the low number of prosecutions and convictions in both countries. GRETA recommended that Sweden ensures access to unconditional support, free and specialised legal assistance, and compensation for victims, and that Iceland ensures that victims are not forcibly returned to countries where they risk being re-trafficked.

Re/integration of Southeast Asian migrant and trafficked women in the UK

This [new report](#) by the UK NGO Southeast and East Asian Centre documents the experiences of women from the Philippines, Indonesia, and Vietnam who migrated or were trafficked to the UK. It focuses on the challenges the women faced with social and economic inclusion and access to support services, as well as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also highlights the role of community networks and NGOs in supporting women to find work and build a new life in the UK.

Accessing Justice: Challenges faced by trafficked persons and smuggled migrants

A new [policy brief](#) by UNODC provides insights into the obstacles faced by smuggled migrants and trafficked persons in their attempt to access justice. It also makes recommendations to states on how to best ensure unhindered access to justice for the victims of these crimes.

Uyghurs forced to process the world's fish

[This new investigation](#), published in the *New Yorker*, alleges that forced labour taints the seafood that many Europeans and North Americans eat. It describes the systematic transfer of ethnic minorities, especially Uyghur, sometimes against their will, from the Xinjiang region of China to seafood processing factories in other provinces. From there, the seafood ends up in supermarkets, schools, and public institutions in more than 25 countries around the world.

Why do children call child helplines?

Child Helplines International released their Global Child Helpline Data from 2022. The helpline members received almost 3.8 million calls from children who needed counselling. Mental health and violence were the two most common reasons for calling, followed by family and peer relationships, missing children, and sexuality. See [more](#).

Digital Border Governance

A [UN Human Rights - Essex University study](#), highlights the human rights impact of the use of digital technologies on border governance, emphasising the need to address potential harms while harnessing opportunities for safe migration, and offering recommendations for a human rights-based approach to using digital technologies at borders. Watch a short animated video summarising the key findings [here](#) and access the [full study here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **31 October** –Webinar “Towards Participatory grant making”. See [more](#).
- **31 October** – Symposium “User-Generated Content and Trafficking in Human Beings”, Vienna, Austria. See [more](#).
- **31 October–1 November** – Global Stakeholder Consultations on the Regional Reviews of the GCM. See [more](#).
- **25 November–10 December** – [16 days of activism against gender-based violence](#).
- **27–29 November** – 12th UN Business and Human Rights Forum, Geneva Switzerland. See [more](#).

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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