

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](mailto:info@lastrada.org).

LSI NEWS

Urgent call to EU negotiators to strengthen rights of all victims of crime regardless of residence status

Joint CSO Statement on EU Victims' Rights Directive

Together with PICUM and over 40 other NGOs, La Strada International [called](#) on Victims' Rights Day upon EU negotiators to strengthen the rights of all victims of crime, no matter their residency status.

Especially safe and confidential mechanisms must exist that give people the opportunity to report abuse without fearing immigration enforcement or other punishments. Access to such mechanisms is not provided for in the revised EU THB Directive, hence even more important that this is embedded in the EU Victims' Rights Directive.

Input for UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and Girls

La Strada International submitted input for the next report by the UN special rapporteur Reem Alsalem on prostitution (sex work) and violence against girls and women. The rapporteur will present this report later this year to the Human Rights Council. An alternative repository will be published by the Count Me In! coalition since we do not expect the inputs to be published on the special rapporteurs website. If your organisation wants to share their input you can send it in [here](#).

Non-Punishment Guidance Documents Translated in Multiple Languages

La Strada International actively pushes for legislative changes and more guidance at European level to promote a better application of the Non-Punishment Principle across Europe. Two Guidance Documents developed by LSI's working group on Non-Punishment have now been translated in multiple languages. The Advocacy Document is translated into [French](#), [German](#), [Spanish](#), [Italian](#), [Swiss \(DE, IT, French\)](#), [Danish](#) and [Serbian](#). Also the Explanatory Brief is now available in [French](#), [German](#), [Spanish](#), [Italian](#), [Swiss \(DE, IT, French\)](#), [Danish](#) and [Serbian](#).

LSI MEMBERS NEWS

Highlights from LSI members' Work in February:

- **Anti-Slavery International** held a webinar this month featuring a panel discussion about import bans against forced labour. Civil Society experts discussed the power of this tool to combat forced labour in global supply chains.
- **MRCI** works on uniting families in Ireland, as the country currently reviews the family reunion policy. Many immigrants in Ireland are denied their basic right to be united with their family, despite working full-time. Simply because they don't earn well enough or because of the type of job they have. MRCI is mobilizing people to e-mail Minister McEntee and ask him to improve the situation of migrant workers. An e-mail template for this can be found [here](#).
- **Proyecto Esperanza** (now **Amaranta**) has published a report addressing the situation and struggles of migrant women in Spain. The report also entails specific recommendations. It is available in Spanish [here](#).
- **Open Gate** employee Marija Todorovska is now part of the Commission for Monetary Compensation for Violent Crimes in North Macedonia. This Commission, inaugurated on February 29, aims to provide monetary compensation to victims of violent crimes, including trafficked individuals, based on a newly implemented law from 2023. It serves as an independent legal entity promoting social solidarity and aims to mitigate victim suffering. We are happy to see Open Gate represented in this commission and congratulate them on their successful effort to get the law and this commission established!



WHAT IS HAPPENING?

EU Law Revision and Negotiations

The VAW Directive and the EU Anti-Trafficking Directive have both been adopted now by the Council and the FEMM and LIBE committees. The European Parliament should now still vote on both directives which is expected to be done around 10/11 April 2024. EU Members States should likely transpose both Directives now respectively by mid-2027 (VAW) and mid 2026 (THB Directive). There are no agreements yet on the EU Forced Labour Ban regulation and the Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD).

Still No Endorsement of EU's Due Diligence Law

Yesterday, EU negotiators shamefully failed to endorse the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive. This marks a deplorable setback for corporate accountability and the protection of Human Rights and the environment worldwide. Over 140 organisations including La Strada International have signed a [joint press statement](#) sharing their discontent with the latest developments. As our member Anti-Slavery International [highlights](#), there is still time and "we still have the opportunity to fight for this", but clearly all depends on people's support and political will to improve conditions for millions of workers around the world. It is unclear when the next vote will be scheduled. See also MEP [Lara Wolters' reaction speech](#) showing her disappointment to the recent events.

HUODOC-GRETA Data Base on Domestic Case Law

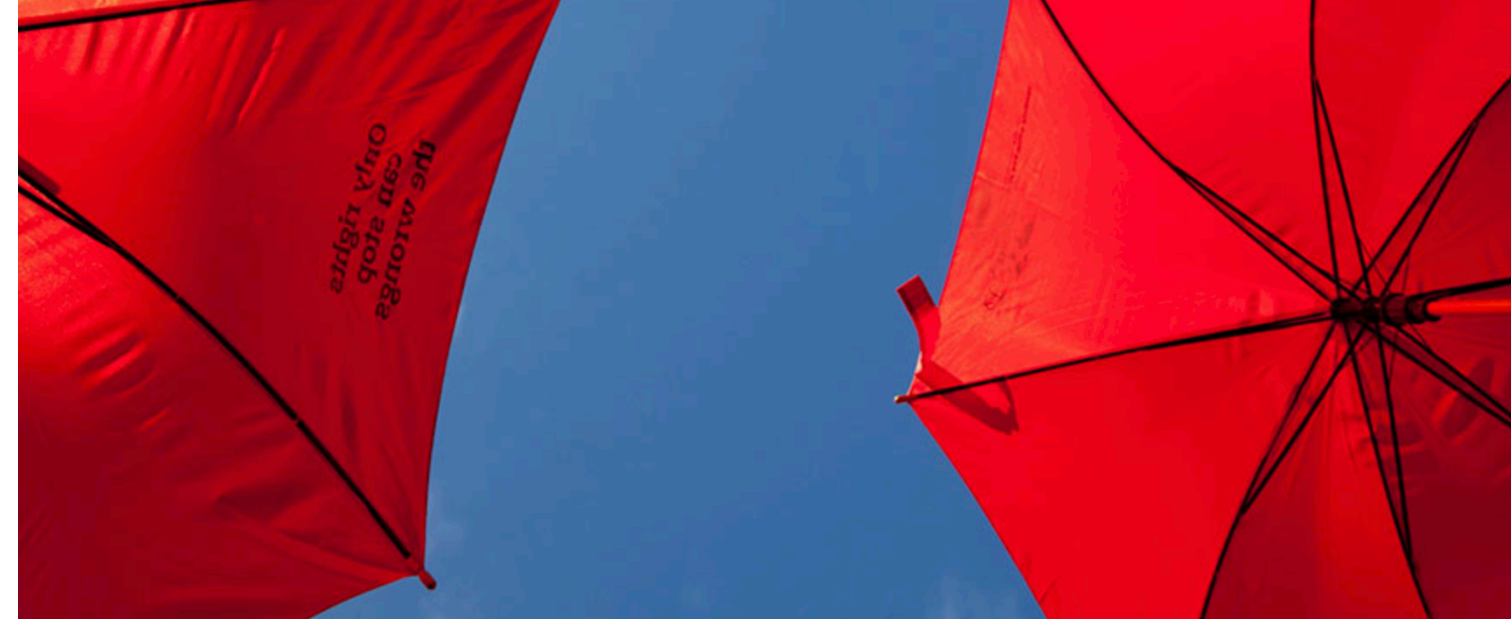
The Council of Europe anti-trafficking division has launched a project to supplement the [HUODOC-GRETA database](#) which contains all reports prepared by the Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA). You can submit a domestic case law on human trafficking [here](#).

European Commission Strengthens Protection of Children

This month the EU commission announced to ensure that the EU has the right legal framework to protect children. The revised directive on sexual abuse and exploitation of children expands the definitions of offences, introduces higher penalties and more specific requirements for prevention and assistance to victims. Find more info [here](#).

Furthermore, the European Commission announced to investigate if TikTok breaches online laws aimed at protecting children from harmful content. The Commission states that they are especially concerned about negative effects such as the site's addictive design and "rabbit hole effects" which pull users deeper and deeper into content, ultimately presenting a risk to children's physical and mental well-being. Read the full article [here](#).

WHAT IS NEW



CoE Commissioner Calls for Sex Workers' Rights Approach

Stating that: "The lived realities of sex workers across Europe raise serious human rights concerns, the Council of Europe's Human Right Commissioner Dunja Mijatović, called for an approach to sex work that is firmly based on human rights and focuses on the effective protection of sex workers' rights, prioritising their safety, agency and bodily autonomy over stereotypes and misconceptions". She published a report this month, highlighting the need to protect sex workers more in their work. We are very happy to see that the Council is aware of the lack of protections for sex workers that are currently in place and hope the report will lead to improvements for sex workers' situations. See [Sexual and reproductive health and rights in Europe: a mixed picture of progress and challenges calls for robust action and commitment - Commissioner for Human Rights \(coe.int\)](#) and the [published press release](#).

ILO Reports on Decent Work Platform Economy and on Economics of Forced Labour

A new ILO report '[Realizing Decent Work in the Platform Economy](#)', provides up-to-date information on the way countries are handling the opportunities and challenges created by the growth of this form of work, by presenting a description of existing regulations and practices from around the world.

The report also includes a questionnaire via which Governments are requested to provide their views on the form, scope, and content of any future labour standards. More [here](#).

On 19 March, ILO will [launch of a new ILO report](#) entitled "Profits and Poverty: The Economics of Forced Labour", which estimates the illegal profits generated from forced labour. See events calendar below.

Report by Labour Exploitation Advisory Group

This recently published [report](#) explores the concept of the "continuum of exploitation". It shows how workers' experiences can be understood as existing along a "continuum" ranging from decent work to conditions of forced labour and trafficking. The report also presents different recommendations and is based on workers' real lived experiences and cooperations with several other CSOs.

UNODC Manual on Human Trafficking Mock Trial Cases

UNODC has published a new [manual](#) focusing exclusively on human trafficking mock trial cases. It is a step-by-step guide to help planners prepare and conduct a mock trial, covering all relevant aspects of the exercise and considering different cultures and legal systems. The manual outlines the content of the mock trial, the main stages, the roles to be played, the tools to be used and the issues that may arise at each stage. The manual has been developed with support of the US TIP office.

Outlaw Ocean Project Investigates North Korean Forced Labour in Seafood Industry

The [Outlaw Ocean Project](#) published a [new article](#) that is part of a three-part series investigating human rights and environmental abuses in the global seafood industry. Based on interviews with North Korean workers from companies that provide many big U.S. and European seafood consumers with goods, findings show bad treatment of workers, including women who were captured at processing plants in China where their wages were taken from them and they were sexually abused.

OECD Publication: "Breaking the Vicious Circles of Informal Employment and Low-Paying Work"

The new publication '[Breaking the Vicious Circles of Informal Employment and Low-Paying Work](#)', addresses the issue that most workers in developing and emerging economies are working carry double the burden with the issue of informal and low-paying work. The report talks about different angles of the issue such as the difficulty of repositioning between formal and informal employment and social protection gaps and features policy recommendations.

Role of AI in Preventing Human Trafficking

With the raise of Artificial Intelligence, experts are thinking about ways to use it in human trafficking prevention. AI has the potential to detect and prevent human trafficking in the supply chain. It can analyse and monitor the supply chain and can flag potential risks for trafficking, which gives the opportunity to intervene and disrupt the operation of traffickers and stop forced labour. [This article](#) elaborates on the potential benefits of AI.

First Global Technical Guidance for Administrative Data on Trafficking in Persons

A new [guidance](#) mainly serves for government actors which are working on the collection, management and use of administrative data on trafficking in persons. However, it can also serve civil society actors to leverage their administrative data on trafficking in persons.

European Greens Acknowledge Role of Civil Society

The European Green Party adopted its [2024 EU elections Common Manifesto](#) and their priorities. The manifesto includes important statements related to the combating of human trafficking and labour exploitation and the protection of its victims including protection programmes and resident rights. We are happy to see that the necessity and work of the [Civil Society for EU](#) is reflected in the Green Party manifesto.

US Department of Health and Human Services on Trafficking in Persons

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) published a National Human Trafficking Prevention Framework: a catalytic effort to harness established concepts of violence prevention to prevent human trafficking. It contains eight strategies and 32 approaches that can prevent human trafficking and its recurrence (primary and secondary prevention) while promptly identifying and reducing harm caused by human trafficking (secondary and tertiary prevention). Their framework is based on experiences of human trafficking organisations and professionals. Read the whole framework [here](#).

Application to Alliance 8.7 Global Coordination Group

Alliance 8.7 NGO Forum is calling for applications from civil society organisations to fill a vacant seat on the Alliance's Global Coordination Group. Civil Society Organisations that are members of the group are involved in strategic decision-making processes and take on the role of providing a critical voice on behalf of all organisations involved in the combating of human trafficking. If you are interested, you can read more about the criteria and application process [here](#). The deadline for applications is 15 March 2024.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **5 March** – Briefing on the EDVAW Platform; the Platform of International & Regional Mechanisms on Discrimination and Violence Against Women. More info [here](#). Registration [here](#).
- **7 March** – Beyond transit: rethinking the times and spaces of migration in an era of complex trajectories. CERCI Institute. Toronto and online. More info and registration [here](#).
- **11 March** – Regional European review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) & International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). See more [here](#).
- **11-12 March** – 4th edition of the Fundamental Rights Forum of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). More info [here](#), Registration [here](#).
- **11 - 22 March** – CSW68. More info [here](#).
- **14 March** – Seminar 'Effective legal protection and access to justice for all - a fundamental rights perspective'. Organized by The European Commission and the European Economic and Social Committee. EESC premises (Rue Belliard 101, 1000 Brussels) and online. More info [here](#) and registration [here](#).
- **15 March** – Online virtual parallel event CSW68: 'Preventing exploitation among displaced women from Ukraine'. Organised by La Strada International, La Strada Ukraine, The Government's Office of the Government of Ukraine Commissioner on Gender Equality Policy and the Council of Europe (GRETA secretariat) and the Office of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, 16.30-18.00 hrs. Registration [here](#).
- **19 March** – Event 'Profits and Poverty: The Economics of Forced Labour'. ILO, Résidence Palace in Brussel and online. More info and registration [here](#). Link to program in [EN](#) and [EB](#).
- **28 March** – Roundtable on Human Trafficking, Forced Criminality and Scam Centres (virtual). Organised with the participation of INTERPOL. More information and registration [here](#).
- **15-16 April** – OSCE 24th High-Level Alliance against Trafficking in Persons Conference entitled 'Beyond Awareness-Raising: Reshaping Human Trafficking Prevention'. Vienna, Austria. More information and registration [here](#).

Support us

We are 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.

[Donate Now](#)

