

NEWSLETTER JUNE 2024

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 Platform Meeting in Paris

From 24 – 26th of June, La Strada International organised its annual General Assembly (NGO Platform meeting) in Paris, France. Here, European advocacy strategies and legislative changes, ongoing projects, and actions were discussed, next to trends and data over 2023, based on the assistance provided to trafficked persons. See [more](#).

Public Event on Sport Events and their Link to Human Trafficking

Ahead of the upcoming Olympic Games in Paris from 26 July to 11 August 2024, LSI and CCEM organised a [public event](#) on the link between human trafficking and sport (events). While evidence on the link between human trafficking and major sports events is generally lacking and the links remain complex, panellists discussed the risks of severe forms of labour exploitation prior and during sport events; highlighting preventive measures to take and lessons learnt. LSI will still publish a short report on this event, highlighting the main findings and information shared.

Info Rights Posting of Workers in Agriculture and Manufacturing

Since March, LSI partners in the EU funded project [Info Rights](#), aiming to enhance information and awareness on the rules and procedures regarding intra-EU posting of workers in the agriculture and manufacturing sectors. Currently the project consortium is working on the development of a Chatbot to provide accessible and quality information on employment conditions of displaced workers.

LSI Representation

On 10th of June, LSI participated in the CBSS [Child Trafficking – Justice, Healing and Protection conference \(cbss.org\)](#), addressing child trafficking referral systems, intergovernmental cooperation and child-centred procedures. On 11th of June, LSI spoke about NRM practices at the event: *Building Trust, Technology, and Common Protocols in Europe for the safeguarding and protection of victims of trafficking in persons*, hosted by Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic. A summary of the conclusions of the event can be found [here](#). On 12th of June, LSI contributed to the [2024 European Regional Freedom from Slavery Forum's](#) panel on: Labour Exploitation Risks & Migration Policies in Europe. On 18th of June, LSI provided input for a webinar on human trafficking for GBV specialists in humanitarian emergencies.



LSI MEMBERS NEWS

Highlights from LSI Members' Work in June:

- **MRCI** advocated for 15 years to reduce dependency and exploitation of migrant workers. The right to change employer is now a reality for thousands of people working across Ireland on employment permits, as the Irish Parliament has adopted the [Employment Permits Bill 2022](#). This includes a new procedure for workers on employment permits [to apply to change their employer](#) on the same permit after nine months of working for their first employer.
- **Anti Slavery International** is campaigning around the UK elections on the 4th of July, to ensure that the new Government prioritises legislation to protect against exploitation and slavery. ASI demands laws requiring companies to conduct human rights and environmental checks in supply chains, ensuring accountability, as well as import ban legislation to ban products made with forced labour in the UK.

WHAT IS HAPPENING?



ASI and Global Legal Action Network Win Appeal Case Against the UK

On 27th of June, the UK Court of Appeal handed down a judgment overturning the previous decision on the World Uyghur Congress's legal challenge against the UK government on its failure to investigate cotton imports from the Uyghur Region. The full Court of Appeal judgment can be accessed [here](#).

Anti-Slavery International, the Global Legal Action Network and allies filed the appeal. They believe that this judgement will have a broad impact and sends a strong signal that the UK should not allow itself to become a dumping ground for goods made with forced labour.

Amended THB Directive Soon Enforced

On 13 June [EU Directive 2024/1712](#) has been published, which amends (not replaces!) the EU THB Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims. The amended text will be effective as from 14 July 2024. From this date EU Members States have two years to transpose the amendments.

EU Temporary Protection Directive Extended until March 2026

On 25 June, the Council of the EU [adopted a decision](#) to extend the temporary protection until 4 March 2026 for people displaced from Ukraine. People benefitting from temporary protection enjoy the same rights across the EU, including rights to residence, access to the labour market and housing, medical assistance, social welfare assistance and access to education for children. While, the EU's temporary protection law sets minimum standards of protection, the actual level of assistance can vary from one member state to another. Moreover, it is noted that EU MS are

cutting back on the support they provide to refugees from Ukraine. With PICUM and others, LSI advocates for longer term solutions. See [more](#).

Council Agrees on its Position on Victim Rights Directive

On 13 June, the Council of the EU adopted [its position](#), on the revision of the EU Victim Rights Directive. The Parliament agreed its [position](#) already in April. It is expected that in October/November the negotiations among the EU institutions will start. While the Commission's Proposal and Parliament's position supported important changes to the text to enhance victims' rights, EU Member States showed much less willingness to do so. For example: safe reporting and proposals to enhance compensation to victims of crime, as proposed by the Commission, have not been supported by the Council. This is regrettable, as also the EU THB Directive did not enhance trafficked persons rights to compensation.

C190: Fifth Anniversary of the ILO Convention to Tackle Violence and Harassment in the World of Work

21 June marked the 5th anniversary of the [ILO Convention to tackle violence and harassment in the world of work \(C190\)](#). This Convention is the first international treaty that recognises the right of every person to work in an environment free from violence and harassment. It emphasizes the crucial role of a safe working environment in achieving equality, dignity and opportunities for all workers, regardless of their status or the sector they work in. Despite efforts of national governments to align their policies with C190 goals, issues persist. Harassment and violence disproportionately affect women, migrants, and those in precarious employment. 16 European countries have [ratified C190](#), in 10 of them the Convention is enforced.

ILC Approves Resolution on Decent Work and Care Economy

In June the ILC approved a [resolution](#) put forward by the [General Discussion Committee on Decent Work and the Care Economy](#). The resolution requests ILO to prepare an action plan on decent work and the care economy. The discussion conclusions provide a common understanding of the care economy, its guiding principles and actors. They affirm that labour in the care economy is not a commodity and that all care workers should enjoy decent work. See [more](#).

Better Workers' Rights for Domestic Workers in Ukraine

Domestic workers in Ukraine [have won significant protections](#) due to a new law regulating their work, which was signed by the president on 22 May. The law recognizes domestic work and workers, affording them labour rights and guarantees. Hopefully this will also encourage other European countries and the EU to do the same.

Adaption of Migrant and Immigration Law in Switzerland

The Swiss Parliament has recently adapted Article 50 (Migrant- and Immigration law/AIG50). The article governs residency of people who went to Switzerland by the mean of family reunion, and later on separate from their spouse. This month, the parliament approved the demand that reports of victim rights organisations should be considered when deciding over their residency. This is an important step, for which Swiss CSOs, including our member organisation FIZ, have advocated for a long time. However, not all issues within the AIG50 have been resolved. Read more about it [here](#).

EMPACT Joint Action Days

Between 3 and 9 June, 39 countries from across the globe participated in the [EMPACT joint action days](#) against trafficking in human beings. According to Europol, this resulted in the identification of over 1374 victims, including 1221 adults and 153 children. LSI and its' members have received no further information about the referral and assistance of these victims.

WHAT IS NEW



TIP Report Published

On 24 June, the [2024 Trafficking in Persons Report \(TIP Report\)](#) was released. A major theme of this year's TIP report is technology's role in both trafficking and anti-trafficking activities. According to the report 32,996 victims were identified, while there were only 1667 convictions. As for the ranking of countries efforts, there have been some changes, for example Poland has been upgraded to Tier 1 and Ireland to Tier 2. This year, 33 Countries are ranked Tier 1, which includes 18 European countries (16 EUMS), while 21 European countries are listed in Tier 2. For Europe only Belarus and Russia are ranked in Tier 3, while Malta and Serbia are on Tier 2 Watch List.

While last year no European Heroes were appointed, this year there were two for Europe: Marijana Savić, Director of Atina from Serbia and Rosa Cendón, Advisor Human Trafficking and Gender-based Violence at Catalonia Regional Ministry for Equality and Feminism in Spain.

Committee of the Parties Adopts Recommendations for 8 European Countries

On 21 June 2024, the 34th meeting of the [Committee of the Parties](#) to the CoE Convention on THB was held.

On the basis of [GRETA](#)'s reports, the Committee adopted recommendations for the governments of [Andorra](#), [Finland](#), [Germany](#), [Hungary](#), [Italy](#), [Lithuania](#), [Monaco](#) and [Switzerland](#) for their 3rd evaluation round. The Committee also considered the reports submitted by the authorities of [Estonia](#) (second evaluation round) and [Armenia](#), [France](#), [Malta](#) and [Norway](#) (third evaluation round) on measures taken to comply with the Committee's recommendations.

Emerging Trends in Migrant Smuggling to Europe

A new report "[Emerging Trends in Migrant Smuggling to Europe](#)," by the OSINT (Open-Source Intelligence) team at Agenfor International, provides a comprehensive and up-to-date overview of recent developments in migrant smuggling. The report focuses in particular on migration routes, involved actors, policy impact and practical recommendations.

FAST Thematic Review Recommends Financial Sector to Contribute to Protecting Vulnerable People

A new [FAST Thematic Review](#) calls on the financial sector to play its role in protecting vulnerable people and eradicating modern slavery by 2030. The report recommends making financial services more accessible, affordable, and suitable for all, with a focus on consumer safety and with consideration for the diverse needs of vulnerable populations. Additionally, addressing poverty and underlying vulnerabilities is crucial in reducing financial vulnerability to modern slavery, the report says.

BHRRC Reports Cases of Exploitation of Migrant Workers in Hungary and UK by Recruitment Agencies and Employers

BHRRC [reports](#) that in May, Radio Free Europe released findings from its investigation on exploitation experienced by migrant workers in Hungary. The workers came largely from Ukraine, Serbia, Vietnam and the Philippines, next to Kirgizia. 200 Kyrgyz workers lost their jobs at a South Korean owned factory, while they had paid thousands to a Kyrgyz agency for jobs in Hungary. Workers describe taking out loans to pay the fees. Some of workers were denied proper documentation.

Also 150 Tajik migrant workers were [reportedly](#) charged over USD1,500 each for non-existent seasonal farm jobs in the UK by a recruitment company in Dushanbe, accused of fraud and 'organising illegal migration'. Both cases show the role that foreign recruitment and employment agencies play in the exploitation of migrant workers.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **8-10 July** - Regional training course for human right defenders ,Human Rights at International Borders: Exploring New Technologies, their Risks and Opportunities', Warsaw, OSCE/ODIHR. More information [here](#).
 - **8-9 July** - Meeting of the working group of the Review Mechanism on the TIP Protocol. See more [here](#).
 - **10 July** - Constructive Dialogue on the Review Process of the UN Protocol on Trafficking in Persons. Vienna, Austria and online. See more [here](#).
 - **16-18 July** - OSINT training for humanitarian professionals organised by the EU-funded project CRiTERIA (Comprehensive data driven risk and threat assesment methods for the early and reliable identification, validation and analysis of migration- related risks). Thessaloniki, Greece. More information and registration [here](#).
 - **30 July** - World Day against Trafficking in Persons. See more [here](#).
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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.

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