

## NEWSLETTER JULY 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 Launches Non-Punishment Case Assessment Report

On 30 July, marking World Anti-Trafficking Day, La Strada International published a practical [case assessment report](#) on the Non-Punishment Principle in the context of human trafficking. The report analyses the extent to which national stakeholders consider and apply the non-punishment principle by looking at a total of 28 cases from 11 European countries, submitted by our member organisations. Clearly, despite international and European legally binding standards

the non-punishment principle is rarely applied. Read also our statement regarding the report [here](#).

---

## LSI Joins HRDN Letter Calling upon Newly Elected MEPs to Promote Human Rights

LSI joined a [letter](#) by the Human Rights Democracy Network (HRDN) to the newly elected MEPs of the European Parliament. In the letter, specific recommendations are given to commit to strengthening human rights, support a strong civil society and uphold the rule of law.

---

## LSI Reacts on UN Review Mechanism after Constructive Dialogues

On 9 and 10 of July, representatives of La Strada International and several of its member organisations joined online the constructive dialogues related to the UN Review Mechanism. We submitted the following [input](#); highlighting our concern about the limited space provided for NGOs, the lacking commitment of (European) States for the review process and hence the slow implementation process, with not even one single country report being finalised. In our feedback we also highlight the urgent need for better protection of trafficked persons' rights and their access to (unconditioned) protection and support, including compensation, non-punishment, and residence.

---

## Find LSI Now on Instagram

We have extended our social media presence and can now be found on instagram under the username [@lastrada\\_international](#). Follow us also through this channel for updates on political happenings, stories in the field of human rights and human trafficking and updates from our member organisations.

---

## LSI MEMBERS NEWS

---

### Highlights from LSI Members' Work in July:

- **PAG-ASA** was part of the [Blue Heart Campaign](#) in Belgium, which takes place every year in light of the World Day Against Trafficking In Persons. Over 65 cities are lighted up in blue to raise awareness about human trafficking. See more about it [here](#).
- **On the Road** is celebrating 30 years of its work in the field of human trafficking. Read more about their work and the history of the organisation [here](#).
- **FLEX** has published a [new report](#), looking into working and living conditions and systemic risks of labour exploitation on UK farms, where many workers face issues ranging from underpayment, humiliation and unsafe accomodation to the limited ability to take sick

leave.

- **CCEM** is handing out their own Olympic Medals in July, August and September. The organisation will crown first, second and third place daily changing categories. Be aware that these awards will make no one proud. Follow the CCEM olympics online on their LinkedIn and read more about it [here](#) (in french).



## WHAT IS HAPPENING?

### EU Plans to Launch EU Anti-Trafficking Hub

DG HOME has issued a [tender](#) to support the EU's anti-trafficking efforts. The deadline to apply was 26<sup>th</sup> of July. The general objective of the contract is to assist the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator and DG HOME in establishing and operating the Anti-trafficking, Hub. The selected contractor will provide consultancy, technical assistance and support the collection and processing of relevant information and data in the area of combatting trafficking in human beings. The Hub will primarily aim at addressing the shortcomings in the implementation of the Anti-trafficking Directive, identified in the evaluation and aim at stronger harmonisation, as well

as serve the implementation of the EU Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings (2021-2025) and any upcoming strategy or action plan.

---

## ECtHR Ruling in Case of Sex Workers vs. France

On 25 July, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has found that France's law which criminalises the purchase of sex does not violate article 8 of the Human Rights Convention. The case was brought to the ECtHR by a group of 261 sex workers. La Strada International and other CSOs regret the decision of the ECtHR. Read more in this [joint statement](#).

---

## Forthcoming Election of GRETA Members

The terms of office of 8 of the 15 current members of the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) will expire on 31 December 2024; 6 of them can stand again. The deadline for nominating candidates by Parties to the Convention is on 29 September 2024. See [more](#).

Several countries have already indicated which experts they will nominate. The Netherlands supports the Dutch National Rapporteur [Conny Rijken](#) for a second term, while Belgium does the same for [Peter van Hauwermeiren](#). Germany has already nominated [Dorothea Czarnecki](#) and Poland nominated [Julia Muraszkwicz](#) last week. Those four candidates are all also strongly supported by La Strada International.

It is expected that several other current GRETA members will also stand again. Furthermore at least Austria, Czechia, Denmark, Serbia, Spain, and Switzerland have launched calls for the nomination of national GRETA experts. The elections to fill the vacant seats will be held on 29 November 2024.

---

## UNSR on Trafficking in Persons Advocates for Regular Migration Pathways

End of June, the special UN Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children, Siobhán Mullally, published a statement on her [latest report](#) which was now presented to the HRC. The report, which sets out the obligations that apply to States and other maritime actors, including non-State actors, commercial vessels, and international organizations, to ensure effective prevention of trafficking and protection of victims at sea, including, in particular, child victims. The Rapporteur stresses the dangers which people face on migration routes, highlighting the deaths of at least 8500 people during migration in the past year.

She and other UN experts also [welcomed](#) the decision by the newly elected UK Government to scrap the policy to transfer asylum seekers who meet certain conditions to Rwanda for asylum processing.

---

## Belgian Parliament Approves New Labour Law for Sex Workers

The Belgian Parliament has approved the country's first labour law for sex workers. While it was already possible to work as a self-employed sex worker in Belgium, the new law enables sex

workers to work under working contracts. This gives them access to social security measures such as pension, health insurance, family benefits, annual vacation or maternity leave. The new law is a great achievement for sex workers rights, to read more about the new law, visit [ESWAs website](#).

---

## Malta Adopts First National Anti-Trafficking Strategy

Malta has adopted its first national anti-trafficking strategy alongside their first National Action Plan. The newly adopted strategy is expected to equip Malta with more effective tools to prevent human trafficking and protect victim rights. It also ensures the punishment of offenders and leaves room to react to new trends and challenges. Read the statement of the COE [here](#).

---

## OSCE Special Representative Welcomes France's Efforts in the Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings

OSCE Special Representative Kari Johnstone commended France's collaborative efforts led by the Interministerial Mission for the Protection of Women Against Violence and the Fight Against Human Trafficking (MIPROF). Discussions emphasized establishing the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and the need for well-resourced services, independent of victims' cooperation with law enforcement. The OSCE offered technical assistance to support these efforts, including a multi-stakeholder approach to victim identification. Read more about the special Representatives' visit [here](#).

---

## Australian Human Trafficking NGO Accused of Fraud by BBC

A recent BBC article unveils that the Australian NGO Project Rescue Children, has been deceiving donors and inventing false stories of human trafficking to raise money over the past years. The investigative article finds that much of the raised money has never reached the organisations, it was allegedly raised for and that pictures of victims were faked. If true, this will also harm other NGOs in the field. Read the full investigative piece [here](#).

---

**WHAT IS NEW?**





---

## The Struggle of Chinese Workers

A new [report](#) by the Dutch research institute SOMO shows multinational companies have long relied on Chinese workers' cheap labour to produce goods such as phones, laptops or shoes. However, recently many big firms have retreated from China as a place of production as a way of supply chain de-risking. Read more on our [website](#).

---

## The Role of Technology in the Lives of Forcibly Displaced People

A [magazine](#) by Forced Migration Review (FMR) discusses the role of digital technologies in the lives of forcibly displaced people. While digital technologies can help migrants, for example by informing and shaping their migration and settlement in new places, technology can also be used against them. Technological possibilities such as predictive modelling, geolocation tracking on mobile phones or biometric data can be dangerous to forcibly displaced people or migrants in general.

---

## Access to Justice for Migrants in Detention

A new [JRS Europe Report](#) dives into the issue of effective access to justice for migrants in situations of detention. The report looks into access to legal assistance and complaint mechanisms for migrants to address rights violations or other mistreatments, while in detention. The report also reviews the possibility of international protection and other core topics.

---

## State Imposed Forced Labour in the Cotton Industry

Cotton Campaign recently revealed in a [report](#) how the Turkmen government forces state employees to work in the cotton harvesting industry. The organisation calls on civil society, governments and international organisations to increase the pressure on Turkmenistan to ban state imposed forced labour. The U.S has banned cotton products from Turkmenistan.

Read more about the issue on our [website](#).

---

## Report Gives Insight into Death Toll at the EU-Belarus Border

The Ocalenie Foundation in Poland, in collaboration with partner organisations from Lithuania, Latvia, and Belarus, has published a [comprehensive report](#) on the death toll at the EU-Belarus border, in the context of the humanitarian crisis in the border area since summer of 2021. By the end of March 2024, 116 border deaths had been documented in the four countries and at least another 26 cases had been reported by migrants in testimonies.

---

## Few Trafficking Victims Claim Compensation in UK due to Barriers

[A new report](#) by After Exploitation shows that only 133 applications for compensation, filed through a government scheme for violent crime in the UK, have been accessed by trafficking survivors. Seeing that a total of 53000 victim referrals were made during the same period, it becomes evident that only few apply, even though under international law human trafficking victims have the right to compensation. The report reveals that applicants face very long waiting times, with 1 in 7 people who applied for compensation in 2021 or 2022 still waiting for a reply. The full report also features recommendations to improve the situation.

---

## How AI Can Improve Our Understanding of Survivors Needs

[Recent research](#) by Aberystwyth University, Trilateral Research, Causeway Charity, and FiftyEight found that AI can help analyze support needs for survivors of modern slavery. The study showed AI's results match those from traditional research but needs a lot of human input, including people with lived experience, for training and data interpretation. The AI struggled with culturally specific language. They also developed an app used by over fifty survivors for self-journaling, which provided a safe, therapeutic space and could complement traditional support methods.

---

## Challenges in Screening Procedures Part of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum

The recently adopted Screening Regulation as a part of the heavily criticised EU Pact on Migration and Asylum sets out several requirements that need to be met for screening procedures at external borders. [This article](#) provides an overview of the requirements for screening regulations and discusses potential challenges. These requirements are important to monitor regarding the fundamental human rights of people subject to 'screening' procedures.

---

## PICUM Briefing on Criminalisation of Migration and Solidarity

Despite extensive evidence of the direct link between the EU's legal framework and the

criminalisation of migration and solidarity, the Commission's proposal for a [new Facilitation Directive](#) not only fails to prevent the widespread criminalisation which occurred under the 2002 Facilitation Directive, but will likely dramatically increase it, according to PICUM. The organisation published a briefing with a comprehensive analysis of the new Facilitation Directive. Read the full text [here](#).

---

## Call For Papers: IMISCOE Spring Conference 2025

The 2025 IMISCOE Spring Conference will be held by Krems University (Austria). The call for papers under four main themes is now open. Paper on the following topics can be sent in:

- Irregular Migration Processes and Journeys: Aspirations, Capabilities, and Decision Making in the Context of Irregularised Movements
- Integration and Settlement Processes: Rethinking Societal and Systemic Inclusion and Exclusion
- Governance of Irregular Migration: Rethinking Policy Implications
- Knowledge Production on Irregular Migration

Abstracts (maximum 250 words) can be submitted until September 6. For more information, visit the IMISCOE Spring Conference 2025 [page](#).

---

## BLOGS

### Sport Events and Human Rights

With the current Paris Olympics, this [blog](#) post uses evidence from past sporting events to ask the question: is there a way to rewrite the script around these games where the fight against human trafficking for sexual and labour exploitation does not harm sex workers? "It is important to ask what perpetuates policies of increased policing, moral panic, and the notion that host cities will witness a rise in sex work and trafficking," the authors say.

Another [recent article](#) discusses the case of sports events and human rights violations using the example of the 2022 FIFA world cup in Qatar, which was the first sports event that was delivered with a team of human rights volunteers monitoring human rights issues at event venues on match days. The article discusses the lack of evidence of events applying Human Rights Due Diligence and remedy efforts.

The ILO has release a [podcast](#) on 'Creating social change through a decent work Olympics', where they talk about this years' olympics social goals that are inspired by the ILO's decent work agenda. Further, this new [documentary](#), highlights the groundbreaking Social Charter adopted by the organizers of the Paris Olympic and Paralympic games.

---

## ONLINE TOOLS



## SLC Lecture: The Register of Damage for Ukraine: Towards Reparation for Victims?

In this lecture you can learn more about the register of damage for Ukraine and how it will be used to hold Russia accountable by providing reparations for victims. Watch [here](#).

Nearly 2,5 years after the full-scale Russian invasion, many Ukrainians find themselves confronted with exploitative practices including labour exploitation by temporary employment agencies and companies. See this [article](#) by a team of four investigative reporters from across Europe.

---

## HLPF Side Event “Mobilizing the Financial Sector Against Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking”

At this years High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) a side event on mobilizing the financial sector against human trafficking was held. The side event launched Phase 3 of the "Finance Against Slavery and Trafficking" (FAST) Initiative under UNDP. Participants heard from diverse speakers about the financial sector's role in these efforts. Financial institutions are often connected to human trafficking issues via their own operations or business relationships. Learn more about the topic [here](#).

---

### UPCOMING EVENTS

---

- **12 September** - Mary Robinson Speaker Series 2024 - Business is never neutral: Event on corporate responsibilities in times of conflict and crises. See more [here](#).
- **27 September** - CoE final nomination of Greta Candidates

---

## 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](#)



---

*Copyright © 2024 La Strada International, All rights reserved.*

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

---