

Overview of La Strada International's work in 2025

Research

LSI worked on 9 research papers, of which 4 were published in 2025.

- **Baseline report [Trafficking for the Exploitation of Surrogacy](#)**, including an annex on the countries review.
- **Paper on [how did the \(exploitation of\) surrogacy end-up in the EU anti-trafficking Directive](#)**
- Comparative Analysis of the [Legal and Policy Landscape on \(Trafficking for the Exploitation of\) Forced Marriage Across Europe](#).
- [LSI Report: Trafficking Risks Among Displaced Ukrainians - La Strada International](#)
- [Assessment of the Principle of Non-Punishment: Collection of Case Law](#).
- **Illegal Adoption report** baseline analysis conducted (*not published yet*).
- **NRMs** – baseline analysis conducted, not published yet, continues in 2026.
- **Compensation/assets recovery** – research and 16 interviews conducted, publication scheduled for 2026
- **Chapter shrinking space**/report – a chapter has been submitted for an academic book, publication scheduled for 2026.
- **Identification paper** – There is an internal document.
- LSI was involved in 4 research papers for the EU Anti-Trafficking Hub.

Publications & statements (and submissions)

In total, LSI published 5 own statements, 13 joint statements and 11 publications.

- **14 January** – [joint statement](#) Omnibus proposal - 168 NGOs call upon the European Commission to actively safeguard EU corporate accountability laws, reaffirm the official timeline for their transposition and implementation, and ensure full transparency regarding the Omnibus process.
- **January** - joint [Input to the addendum to the report of the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls on the concept of consent](#) in relation to violence against women and girls.
- **9 February** – La Strada International co-signed a [Position Paper on Gender Stereotypes](#), submitted by the Dutch CEDAW network as input for the CEDAW's General Discussion on Gender Stereotypes.
- **12 February** - La Strada International joined more than 60 organisations in signing a joint [statement](#) **calling on EU leaders to step up and protect Global Development Aid** in response to alarming policy shifts by the Trump administration.
- **19 February** - LSI has co-signed a [joint statement](#) calling for sustainable and independent support for civil society.
- **24 February** - launch of [LSI Report: Trafficking Risks Among Displaced Ukrainians - La Strada International](#)
- **4 March** – [joint statement](#) on Three years since the activation of the Temporary Protection Directive: from emergency to longer-term solutions – calling upon EU Member States not to

roll back support to people displaced from Ukraine, and to fully implement the provisions enshrined in the TPD.

- **6 March** - La Strada International has co-signed a [statement](#) sharing our solidarity with the people of Serbia. Together with over 130 civil society organisations (CSOs), we have expressed our concern with the recent developments in Serbia, particularly the escalating repression and attacks on civil society and critical voices in the country, including [police raids](#) on five prominent non-governmental organisations in Serbia.
- **8 March** - On the occasion of International Women's Day, La Strada International launched a [statement](#), calling for attention for forced marriage as a crime and as a form of human trafficking.
- **10 March** - LSI co-signed with 361 other CSO's a [statement opposing the European Commission's Omnibus proposal](#), which seeks to scale back key sustainability laws and reduce obligations for businesses.
- **12 March** - LSI co-signed a [statement](#) sharing solidarity with the people of Serbia, together with over 130 civil society organisations.
- **April**- policy brief with ASI - [Recommendations for the Designation of National Competent Authorities under the EU Forced Labour Product Ban Regulation](#)
- **12 May** - LSI endorsed an [open letter](#) to the Human Rights Council urging Member States to mandate a comprehensive study that translates existing theoretical frameworks into practical recommendations, providing States and institutions with tools, policies, and guidance to better integrate human rights into anti-corruption efforts.
- **13 May 2025** - the book [Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation Around the World](#) was launched. La Strada International (SH and Merel) wrote Chapter 13 - A critical look at the criminalization of the "Use of Services" of trafficked persons.
- **22 May** - LSI co-signed a [letter on fighting corruption](#), initiated by Transparency International and TI EU, who have been actively advocating at the EU Council and Parliament, and throughout the trilogue process for a strong EU Anti-corruption Directive and to uphold and strengthen the robust provisions adopted by the European Parliament in the proposed directive.
- **28 May** – LSI and over 300 national and international CSOs co-signed an [open letter](#) to the EU Commission to express concerns about the "Transparency of Public Life" bill, which enables the Hungarian government to target, defund and dissolve any organisation it designates as a threat to Hungarian sovereignty.
- **28 May** - LSI signed, together with over 80 CSOs, a [joint letter to Commissioner McGrath](#) raising urgent concerns about the Security Decree and wider shrinking civic space and rule of law in Italy.
- **June** – LSI published the Romanian version of the [Explanatory brief on non-Punishment](#) – it is now available in 10 languages, see <https://www.lastradainternational.org/focus-areas/>
- **1 July** – LSI published its 2024 [Annual report](#) and [Financial report](#)
- **30 July** – [LSI statement](#) on Global Day against Trafficking in Persons calling attention for forced marriage.
- **30 July** – LSI published the [Non-Punishment Report](#)
- **15 September** – LSI provided its [input for the EU Civil Society Strategy](#)

- **15 September** – LSI signed a [joint statement](#) on inhumane deportation rules related to the return directive.
- **18 October** – LSI published an overview of LSI members [data on victim assistance](#) by Irina Ionita.
- **18 October** – LSI [Statement](#) on all forms of THB for EU Anti-Trafficking day.
- **27 October** – Publication of the two Surrogacy papers; [baseline report](#) and [short paper on surrogacy becoming part of the THB Directive definition](#).
- **27 October** – LSI and Open Gate published [joint conclusions](#) on forced marriage event.
- **25 November** – publication of the [Forced Marriage report](#) (see above)
- **November** – [publication on due diligence in relation to State Imposed Forced Labour](#) by Anti-Slavery International, launched at a side event at the 14th UN Business and Human Rights Forum 2025, addressing forced labour and human rights due diligence.
- **10 December** – LSI [Statement for Human Rights Day](#) calling attention to exploitative practices in the hospitality sector.
- **18 December** – LSI [Statement for International Migrants Day](#), raising awareness for the need to protect people on the move from exploitation.

Ongoing & new projects

Currently LSI is funded mainly by and involved in 9 projects. LSI currently has no core funding, as all applications for core funding failed, see below fundraising.

- [Comcrim](#) (September 2024 – 2028), a research on patterns of human trafficking with the use of online financial flows data and banking records.
- **Forced Marriage project Open Gate** (research, campaign & event)/French government (2024 - 2025) – research and campaign launched with Open Gate and organised event on 10-12 September in Skopje with Open Gate. See campaign video [„Излез“/Documentary movie "Way out"](#)
- [Info Rights](#) (2024/2026/24 months) – for this project, that finished in February 2025, we have worked on a chatbot for posted workers <https://projetos.fiequimetal.pt/info-rights-chatbot/> and vlogs. See also <https://projetos.fiequimetal.pt/about/>
- [Mobile](#) (start 1 March 2025 – 2027, 24 months) – formally launched on 24/6 – a desk research has been submitted mid-October.
- [Trafficking En Route](#) (1 July 2025 – 30 June 2027) – LSI organised a workshop at the Platform; joined the kick off on 25-26 September 2025 in Amsterdam and worked on a stakeholders mapping and TOR Advisory board - *The 24-month EU (AMIF) funded project aims to address gaps in the identification, transnational assistance, and protection of TCN victims of trafficking for labour exploitation.*
- [HOST](#) – hospitality sector project (1 June 2025 – 30 June 2027). <https://www.kmop.gr/projects-vf/news-host/>
- [Resilia](#) – access to trauma care project (1 October 2025 – 30 September 2027, 36 months).
- **PHD project** [PhD Studentship](#) with Dundee and Napier Universities. The selected PHD student will conduct a small research for LSI between January and April of 2026 on new US-funded organisations operating in Europe (e.g. IJM, Free the Slaves, ATLAS Free).

LSI contributed to 73 International events

Excluding NGO consortia meetings, project consortia meetings and regular update and exchange meetings with relevant stakeholders, except if public events.

January (6)

- **8 January** – (online) launch global report on THB, UNODC
- **21 January** - (online) EP event New EU regulation prohibiting products made with forced labour
- **23 January** – (online) EU consultation meeting on EU Road Map on Gender Equality
- **24 January** – (online) Final conference: "Care4Care: from precarious to safe working conditions" – a project focusing on domestic workers in Austria, Slovakia and Romania, organised by our member LEFO IBF, Vienna Austria.
- **24 January** (online) - members PAYOKE and MIST and others Online Conference - More than their stories: communicating about human trafficking with dignity to challenge stereotypes and empower survivors.
- **29 January** (online) - FRA's consultation on forced labour and workers' rights under CSDDD and FLR

February (4)

- **13 February** – (online) Event on Cotton and Cotton Products Made With State-Imposed Forced Labor: When Disengagement Is The Only Responsible Course Of Action
- **19 February** – (online) launch of UNODC Research Study: Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants in the Context of the Displacement caused by the War in Ukraine.
- **20 February** – (live) Victim Support Europe final conference of the BeneVict project, Brussels, Belgium (Renaissance Brussels Hotel).
- **20 February** – (live) meeting with Polish EU presidency, on revision Victim Rights Directive, Brussels, Belgium

March (7)

- **8 March** (live) award launch Irina Alkhovka, Berlin, Germany
- **13 March** – (online) webinar by the CoE THB specialised lawyers and NGO network
- **20 March** – (live) meeting by ELA on Posted Work
- **21 March** – (online) event by Adpare and MIST
- **24 March** – (online) UNODC Civil Society Coordination meeting
- **26-27 March** – (online) UNODC Regional Conference: "Addressing Trafficking in Persons for Sexual and Labour Exploitation in South-Eastern Europe: Challenges, Promising Practices, and the Role of Modern Technology"
- **31 March – 1 April** – (live) 25th OSCE Alliance Conference on Child Trafficking including side event by Missing Children Europe and ASTRA

April (6)

- **8 April** – (online) Launch of the Report by the Global Commission on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking UN Headquarters, New York.
- **9 - 10 April** – (live) Conference by Polish EU Presidency "Together Against Human Trafficking for Forced Labour and Labour Exploitation: Current Responses and a Way Forward", Warsaw Poland. (LSI represented by LS Poland)
- **11 April** – visit Turkish delegation to the Netherlands (Eefje represents LSI, with Natalia and Nerea)
- **17 April** – (online) La Strada International lunch webinar in cooperation with Napier University on where is the funding for AT Work, elaborating on the impact of the US funding freezes and other funding cuts, earlier ATR research and the PHD post that LSI has launched with Napier and Dundee University for further research on where is the funding for AT work.
- **23-24 April** - (online) UNODC regional conference, Nadia speaks and SH
- **24 April** – (online) ITUC Global Webinar: For Democracy that Delivers for Platform Workers.

May (10)

- **5-7 May** – (live) [Freedom from Slavery Forum](#) Brussels, Belgium
- **8 May** (live) final conference of the project DIRECT -Action Against Exploitation, Brussels Belgium
- **13 May** – (live) Meeting with EU ATC office – for THB HUB, Brussels, Belgium
- **13-15 May** – (live) study visit for CoE – North Macedonia, Netherlands – Nerea and SH
- **15 May** – (live) Event by Dutch Rapporteur celebration of 25th anniversary
- **15 – 16 May** (live) - PICUM General Assembly 2025 on 15-16 May (Bruna);
- **21 May** – (online) event on Cotton Campaign – Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.
- **22 May** - (online) Webinar: Litigation to the CJEU, Immigration Detention and Alternatives to Detention of Children
- **23 May** - (live) Benelux event on the THB Directive revision (Bruna and SH); Brussels, Belgium
- **26 May** - (live) conflict-Related Sexual Violence & Trafficking, Brussels – launch of the report “Understanding the nexus between conflict-related sexual violence and trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation”, commissioned by SRSB Pramila Patten’s Team Rule of Law Experts

June (10)

- **3 June** - (Online) ICMPD vent on exit strategies for the EU’s temporary protection regime beyond March 2026.
- **6 June** – (live) NACR – launch of THB Hub, Brussels, Belgium.
- **10 - 11 June** – (live) Council of Europe conference on “Empowering Change: Technology and AI in the Fight against Human Trafficking”, The Xara Lodge in Rabat, Malta.
- **17 June** – (online) closed consultation on surrogacy (17/6) by UNSR on VAW.
- **18-19 June** – (online) UNODC Regional Conference Hidden Victims, Visible Crimes: Addressing Forced Criminality in Human Trafficking Cases in South Eastern Europe” - Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. – presentation non-punishment report (Irina) – presentation: <https://documentation.lastradainternational.org/lisidocs/3611-UNODC%20Presentation%20Irina.pdf>
- **20 June** – (Live) Workshop on Human Rights and Displacement organised by Napier University in Edinburgh, UK

- **24 June** – (online) kick off Mobile project
- **25 June** - (online) launch of No Penalty Campaign, with UEFA and others
- **25 June** – (online) meeting on indicators of sexual exploitation online, Turing institute
- **30 June** – (live) guest lecture US students

July & August (4)

- **2 July** – (online) - UNDP FAST Initiative & OSCE Panel on IFF and MS/HT
- **8 July** – (live) - CoE round table in the Hague, to discuss GRETA's 3rd round report and the related Committee of the Parties (COP), The Hague Netherlands
- **15 July** - (live) Kick off HOST project - Tackling Human Trafficking in the Hospitality Sector was launched in Athens, Greece.
- **30 July** – UNODC event on Global Day against THB

September (5)

- **10-12 September** - (live) Forced Marriage event, Skopje North Macedonia
- **17-19 September** - (live) NGO Platform, Warsaw Poland
- **23 September** - (online), NACR workshop for THB Hub on Data collection
- **25-26 September** - (live) Kick off trafficked En Route, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- **30 September** – online EU CSP meeting.

October (8)

- **7-8 October** – (live) study visit for CoE, Netherlands
- **14 October** – (online) COMCRIM PAC meeting
- **15 October** – (online) meeting with EU Commissioner Bruner with PICUM – FairWork also present.
- **16 October** - (online) Austrian THB conference, Vienna, Austria
- **17 October** – (online) meeting with EIGE
- **21-22 October** - PICUM Workshop on inclusive participation of people with lived experience in communications (Bruna attended)
- **28 October** – (live) Event on TPD, Brussels, Belgium (SH, Irina and Bruna)
- **31 October** – visit OVSE OSR to office of LSI

November (8)

- **3 - 4 November** – (live) meeting of [CoE specialised network of lawyers and NGOs](#), Strasbourg, France.
- **5 – 6 November**, (live) Kick of Resilia Project, Lisbon, Portugal
- **6 November** - (online) meeting with EU ATC office
- **12-13 November** - (online) UNODC regional conference in Skopje focused on strengthening National Referral Mechanisms. LSI, La Strada Moldova and Open Gate spoke at the event.
- **17 – 20 November** – (live) LSI participated two GAATW meetings in Bangkok on the global criminal justice framework, namely “Alternative justice approaches to gender based violence and human trafficking”, and “How can justice be achieved without using criminal law and

institutions?"; and GAATW's strategy directions, including issues related to forced labour and human trafficking

- **24 November** – (live) Symposium by CoMensha, the Dutch National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children, the Ministry of Justice and Security and the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) focusing on networking among all relevant Dutch anti-trafficking parties, such as healthcare workers, police, municipal agencies, and inspection services, and seeking a deeper understanding of approaches to tackling human trafficking. (LSI contributed to a workshop on NRMs).
- **28 November** - (live) VSE Event, Brussels, Belgium (Irina Ionita)
- **28 November** - (online), Event on litigation before the ECtHR - Immigration detention and alternatives to detention of children

December (5)

- **1 December** - (online) workshop with NACR on NRMs, Brussel Belgium
- **2 December** – (live) event hosted by MEP López Aguilar and supported by UNODC on "Shaping the Future: Tackling Human Trafficking in a Changing Europe", at the European Parliament, in Brussels (SH, Irina and Bruna)
- **5 December** - (live) Event by KMOP, from 14:00 to 18:00 (CET) at Residence Palace, Brussels, Belgium (Irina Ionita)
- **8 December** – (live) First meeting of the informal EU Expert Group on Forced Labour.
- **16 December** – (live) EU Civil Society Platform and NACR, Brussels Belgium

Representation of the Platform by LSI members

LSI members attended many more international events:

- **CSW**, New York, US (Open Gate)
- **24-25 June**, UNDOC global forum for survivors, Vienna, Austria. (Open Gate, LEFO and FIZ)
- **Early October**, Constructive Dialogues (LEFO, KOK)
- **27 - 28 November** - 10th European Migration Forum, in Brussels, by the European Commission and the European Economic and Social Committee. (ACCEM, Amaranta, Ban Ying)
- **Week of 20 November** - HopeNow & Payoke, were present at the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the appraisal of the UN Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons in New York.

Events organised by LSI

La Strada International (co) organised 9 events, including 3 webinars

- **30 April** - [Webinar on where is the funding?](#) – US funding cuts
- **5 – 7 May** - [Freedom from Slavery event](#) – co-hosted (5-7 May)

- **12-15 May** - La Strada International co-organised with the Council of Europe a [study visit for the North Macedonian State Commission](#) on Compensation for Victims of Violent Crimes to the Netherlands.
- **10-12 September** - [Forced Marriage event](#) with Open Gate
- **18 September** - [Public event](#) with CoE, Government of Poland and LS Poland
- **17 – 19 September** - NGO Platform, Warsaw, Poland
- **6-7 October** [Study visit on compensation and legal aid](#) for CoE delegation from Bosnia Herzegovina.
- **16 October webinar** on the exploitation of surrogacy
- **17 October webinar** on the exploitation of forced marriage

Social media

Specific actions – next to statements on 8/3, 30/7, 18/10, 10/12, 18/12 LSI organised the following special actions:

- **Campaign No Penalty** (launched 25/6) LSI has been partnering in the It's a Penalty Campaign, launched on 25 June, uniting high-profile female football players, leading travel and hospitality brands, and NGOs to raise awareness and drive action against human trafficking. See the campaign video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yVMAYJGBdBs>
- **30th Anniversary** – revision of LSI's anniversary video, and interviews with LSI members (not published yet)
- **Ring or Chain?** – LSI joined Open Gate in a [campaign](#) calling attention to forced marriage.
- **Human Trafficking Awareness Week** - To mark the EU Anti-Trafficking Day (18 October), La Strada International launched a week-long awareness campaign focused on the newly recognised forms of human trafficking included in the amended EU Anti-Trafficking Directive: trafficking for the exploitation of surrogacy, of forced marriage, and of illegal adoption. Throughout the week, LSI ran a dedicated social media campaign and organised two expert webinars exploring the complexities of the exploitation of surrogacy and forced marriage as forms of exploitation and their link with human trafficking. The week concluded with a statement urging EU institutions and Member States to strengthen efforts to address all forms of human trafficking and to ensure protection and justice for affected persons.
- **16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence** - La Strada International joins the [16 Days of Activism campaign](#), which started on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, until 10 December, the Human Rights Day. We invite you to follow, like, and share our posts to help raise awareness and amplify the call to end all forms of gender-based violence. See here also the UN Campaign.
- **Fourth edition of our Conscious Christmas advent calendar.** This year, we invited our online audience to look beyond their holiday gifts to the workers, production chains and hidden (exploitative) labour conditions behind your Xmas products and services. <https://tuerchen.app/HE1OnOOQtTl1So8XHMol/1>

Anniversaries

- **30th anniversary** On the Road (April)

- **25th anniversary FairWork** (June)
- **30th anniversary LSI Platform** (September)
- **30th anniversary Open Gate** (September)
- **30th anniversary LS Poland** (September)
- **30th anniversary La Strada Czechia** (September)
- **40th anniversary FIZ**
- **40 anniversary LEFO**