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With this quarterly newsletter, La Strada International wishes to inform and update you on developments in the field of trafficking in human beings and the activities of La Strada International and the La Strada member organisations. We welcome your feedback and input. Please [e-mail us](#) by 1 March 2020 if you have news, information about your organisation, a new report or documentary or an outspoken opinion on (inter)national developments.



La Strada News !

New ATR issue: Public Perceptions and Responses to Human Trafficking

On 18 December 2019 La Strada International co-organised the European GAATW launch of the new ATR issue Public Perceptions and Responses to Human Trafficking in association with the Royal Society of Edinburgh. This new issue looks at the current state of public awareness of human trafficking by questioning how and by whom awareness is produced and influenced, whom it is targeting, and what the impact so far has been; has it lead to any meaningful change?

On the basis of the submitted articles it can be concluded that still most awareness-raising campaigns are conducted without a proper base-line or impact assessment afterwards and that campaign messages still continue to deliver simplistic narratives of ‘victims, villains, and heroes’, while leaving the structural root causes of human trafficking and the systems of domination that underpin them intact. When aiming to raise public awareness, we should question ourselves more often whether the outcomes we want to see, will be reached by costly campaigns targeting the general public and if would not be more effective to take concrete measures in support and empowerment of trafficked persons and those at risks.

EU Parliament event on access to compensation for (undocumented) migrant workers



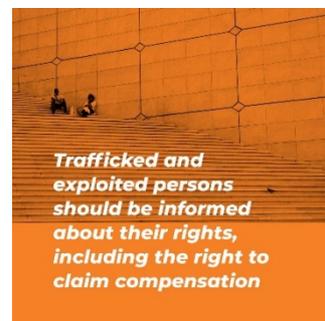
On 2 December 2019, La Strada International, PICUM and Victim Support Europe (VSE) organised the event “Towards compensation for exploitation against migrant workers” held at the European Parliament in Brussels, hosted by MEP Dominic Ruiz Devesa (S&D, Spain). The organisers called upon Members of the European Parliament to take more action on making paid wages and compensation a reality for all migrant workers, including exploited undocumented workers.

Specific recommendations made at the event include: the need to improve the coordination of EU action by different relevant EU bodies; to make EU funding available for effective labour complaints mechanisms; to ensure independent evaluation of existing legislation including the Employers Sanctions Directive and the 2004 Compensation Directive and encourage the EU ratification of relevant ILO instruments and to promote a dialogue between EU authorities with service providers and migrant workers’ organisations. On 2 December PICUM also launched their [new animation](#) on the firewall in labour justice.

Justice at Last - European Campaign and events to promote access to compensation

On 18 October 2019, La Strada International and its members called upon all European elected representatives and European governments to commit to implement our [6-point action plan](#) to ensure access to compensation for victims of crime, in particular trafficked and exploited persons.

The same day LSI together with PICUM organised a side event linked with the 25th meeting of the Committee of the Parties in cooperation with the GRETA secretariat. Lilana Keith, Senior Advocacy officer of PICUM, Vassilis Kerasiotilawyer, Country Director for the Greece Office of HIAS who represented the victims in the *Chowdury v. Greece* and Suzanne Hoff of LSI highlighted a number of legal, procedural, financial and practical barriers that still hinder the access of trafficked and exploited persons to effective remedies, including compensation.



In 2019 the Council of Europe started its 3rd monitoring round, which has a specific focus on access to remedies. A number of provisions of the Convention establishing substantive and procedural obligations are relevant to this topic. Access to justice and effective remedies must be guaranteed to all victims of trafficking subject to the jurisdiction of State Parties, irrespective of their immigration status or presence on the national territory and notwithstanding their capacity or willingness to cooperate in any criminal investigation. It is hoped that the monitoring will ensure that Member States of the Council of Europe will take more action on ensuring access to remedies.

Earlier this year, in May 2019, La Strada International organised an international exchange seminar on access to compensation, related with the 2017-2019 EU funded project Justice at Last – European action for compensation for victims of crime. At this seminar the campaign **Know your Rights, Claim Compensation** was launched, which ran between 18 October and 10 December 2019.

La Strada International NGO Platform meeting in Istanbul, Turkey



La Strada International's General Assembly took place between November 18 and 20 in Turkey, Istanbul. In 2019 the membership of the NGO Platform has been expanded and currently La Strada International comprises 25 counter trafficking NGOs in 19 European (EU and non-EU) countries. Next year, it will be 25 years since the first La Strada Project started.

The General Assembly discussed priority issues for joint European advocacy to influence policies addressing human trafficking and other serious forms of labour exploitation. Recommendations and agreements were further made during 6 workshop sessions on issues of data collection and impact assessment; engaging trafficked persons and migrant workers; adapting joint standards for NGO services; reaching victims and risk groups via online media; promoting safe reporting and complaint procedures for (undocumented) workers and ideas around the setting up of a European network of lawyers and NGOs, initiated by the Council of Europe.

The Syrian conflict and the situation of Syrians and other migrant groups in Turkey and the work of the Turkish member organisation HRDF were also discussed. In addition information was exchanged about ongoing issues of concern including challenges around the increase of Dublin claims for presumed victims of human trafficking and the ongoing European call for criminalisation of sex workers, which the Platform strongly opposes.



At the meeting Eefje de Volder (NL) Evelyn Probst (AU) and Liliana Sorrentino (IT) were re-elected as board members of La Strada International.

Campaign #Nevremezazene (Bad weather for women) in Serbia



LSI's member ASTRA - Anti-Trafficking Action, the Autonomous Women's Center and Women in Black, in cooperation with Feminist Cultural Center BeFem, launched a [campaign](#) to promote the CEDAW Concluding Observations for Serbia. The aim of this campaign is to point out the inadequate approach of the state toward women's rights, and particularly toward the CEDAW Committee's concluding observations concerning the elimination of all forms of discrimination of women and

ensuring their enjoyment of rights. In the campaign, a series of informative videos and visuals present common stereotypes about women, violence against women, human trafficking, education, women's health and the national gender equality mechanism.

Another campaign launched by ASTRA - "Labour exploitation is real" - aims to improve the protection of Serbian youth going for temporary work abroad, suppress illegal work and promote the responsibility of employment intermediaries for the truthfulness of the advertised working conditions and the implementation of supervision in the recruitment process. The campaign is based on an [analysis](#) of the conditions enabling labour exploitation of young people. Other issues the recommendations touch upon are a reduction of abuse in youth co-operatives, changes in the way of performing temporary and occasional jobs, as well as the changes in criminal legislation. (*source GAATW newsletter*)

What's going on ?

GAATW celebrates 25th anniversary

The Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women (GAATW) celebrates its 25th anniversary this year. Founded in 1994, today the Alliance unites more than 80 NGOs worldwide and has established itself as a leading voice for the protection of the rights of migrant and trafficked women. To celebrate this occasion, the Alliance has published a collection of 25 memories expressed by 25 of its (former) employees, Board members, representatives of its Members and independent experts, which is available [here](#).

The European Council will develop an EU Victim Rights Strategy 2020 - 2024

According the [Council conclusions on Victim Rights](#), adopted by the European Council (Justice and Home Affairs) on 3 December 2019, an EU strategy for 2020-2024 on victims' rights will be developed to cover all victims of crime, with a special emphasis on victims of violent crimes. This strategy should include a systematic approach to ensure victims' effective access to justice and compensation and

include measures to promote victims' access to information, support and protection, new practical initiatives for training and, coordination and strengthening the activities of existing EU networks such as the European Network on Victims' Rights and the network of the national contact points established under Article 16 of the Compensation Directive.

La Strada International requests more information about the appointment of the EU ATC

On 12 December La Strada International requested DG Migration and Home with a [letter](#) for more information about the mandate of the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator and the appointment process. Initially when the mandate was established in 2010, the administrative procedures mentioned that the mandate was non-renewable. However the mandate was extended for four years in 2016, which will finish in February 2020. La Strada International calls for transparent and fair selection procedure.

Trafficking in Women and Girls in the Context of Global Migration

CEDAW has been working on the elaboration of a General Recommendation (GR) entitled: "Trafficking in Women and Girls in the Context of Global Migration". A [concept note](#) has been adopted by CEDAW already during its 71st session in October 2018. Since then consultations have been held at global and European level and La Strada International, GAATW and others did send in [submissions](#). Unfortunately there is still no draft available, which was initially expected to be published at CEDAW's 74th session in October 2019. Between 1 and 4 December 2019, a global consultation by NGOs in Kenya organised by IWRAP in collaboration with GAATW and FEMNET took place to discuss the GR. As a result a [joint submission](#) was sent to the CEDAW Committee, co-signed by La Strada International.

UNTOC review mechanism

In September 2019, a working group session took place in Vienna where the draft questionnaire for the UNTOC review mechanism was discussed. In October 2018, a [review mechanism](#) to the UN Palermo Convention was established that will mainly comprise country (desk) reviews; who will be evaluated when will be decided by drawing of lots at the beginning of the review process, staggered in three consecutive years. Each year one third of the States parties to the Convention will be selected to be reviewed for all the instruments they are parties to. Further each State party under review shall provide the responses to the self-assessment questionnaire.

Civil society can participate apparently in three main areas; firstly states parties are 'encouraged' to consult with NGOs for input for the reports they will submit; further NGOs are offered the opportunity to take part in a 'constructive dialogue' convened at the thematic working groups of the UNTOC COP. A panel of representatives from civil-society groups, including NGOs, may be arranged by the UNODC to share independent views on the review process.

European governments call for binding European due diligence obligations

The year 2020 will hopefully represent a benchmark for Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD), whose discussion has been involving more and more European States. While an expert committee appointed by the Norwegian Government has drafted a national law introducing human rights transparency and HRDD for companies, Finland has been promoting it at the EU level during its EU presidency and the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC) [reported](#) that the German government agreed to push for "EU-wide regulation" if companies' voluntary implementation proves to be insufficient. Their [report](#) written in cooperation with ZHAW School of Management and Law has revealed that 90% of the 20 largest German companies are failing to show how they check their risks to human rights. This month, the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) published a [paper](#) looking at examples of business-

related human rights abuse and identifies key factors facilitating access to remedy. A comparative report will follow in 2020, which will identify obstacles for victims seeking justice and put forward proposals to overcome them.

What's new ?

Migrant workers' rights in Eastern Europe

RIGHTS AT WORK!

Earlier this year La Strada International in cooperation with the Rights at Work consortium partners published a [report on tackling labour exploitation in Poland, Bulgaria and Romania](#). Despite differing migratory patterns and economic situations within each national context, many similarities can be seen in the bottlenecks to tackling labour exploitation in Poland, Bulgaria and Romania.

These include remaining lack of awareness among relevant stakeholders and lack of attention for the vulnerability of migrant workers. Furthermore, there are many difficulties with interpretation and implementation of existing legislation in practice. In all three countries there is a need for structural and systematic cooperation among – and engagement of – all relevant stakeholders, including trade unions and migrant workers organisations.

The OECD has analysed the state of **collective bargaining** in its member states and warns of its decline due to a general weakening of labour relations. The [report](#) calls on governmental intervention to provide access to collective bargaining rights beyond standard employment, including the new forms of employment like the ones in the gig economy.

UK reports on exploitation in different labour sectors

Several new reports have recently been published in the United Kingdom that address vulnerability of workers in different labour sectors, partly in relation with the UK's Commitment to address 'Modern Slavery'. Firstly the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority has published [different industry profiles](#) across the main sectors in the UK.

The University of Nottingham launched a [research](#) about the Modern Slavery Act reporting in the Agricultural Sector. Key findings show that although more companies from the UK started publishing their Modern Slavery Report, their content has worsened in quality.

The Construction sector is ranked the second highest-risk sector for forced labour according the UK based organisation KnowTheChain. A [snapshot brief](#) shares the risks relating to construction and explains why investors should be concerned, while providing some good practice responses. KnowTheChain also published another [brief](#) on the risks in the forestry sector and how forestry companies could better check for forced labour risks in their supply chains.

PICUM report on the rights of undocumented migrant sex workers

In September 2019, PICUM published a [research paper](#) addressing the impacts of criminalisation of sex work and how it affects undocumented migrant sex workers, arguing that they are most likely to suffer harsh consequences of criminalisation of sex work. See [blog](#) by PICUM's Chair Edel McGinley.

New VSE reports analysing access to compensation and victim rights

A new report from Victim Support Europe ‘[A journey from crime to compensation](#)’ analyses European Member States’ abilities to provide victim-centric compensation schemes that are fair and appropriate. Based on collected evidence on the inner workings of national compensation schemes, good practices, recommendations for future action, and the current impact on victims. For this report, Victim Support Europe conducted over 200 victim interviews and engaged with numerous stakeholders in the field of compensation.



Recently Victim Support Europe together with project partners from most EU countries accomplished the project Vociare. This project aimed at studying the current status of implementation of the Victims’ Directive and, more importantly, on providing a mapping of common gaps which indicate the need for improvement in all Member States and which create space for cross border debate and exchange of best practices, hoping that all actors comprehend that it is necessary to keep improving victims’ enjoyment of their rights while they walk towards recovery. See the [26 national country reports and one Synthesis report](#) providing the main conclusions.

Ending all forms of labour exploitation in global supply chains

The extent to which child labour, forced labour and human trafficking is intertwined with global supply chains is explored in a [joint report](#) published by a number of international bodies including the International Labour Organisation (ILO), united in Alliance 8.7. By adopting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the international community has committed to end child labour by 2025 and forced labour and human trafficking by 2030. However still an estimated 152 million children are in child labour according to the ILO and 25 million adults and children are in forced labour, including in global supply chains.

Manual for enterprises: Respecting trade unions’ rights in global value chains

Many companies struggle today to address meaningfully risks to trade union rights in their global value chains. This manual aims at equip companies with practical tools to help close the gap between commitment and practice. (Source: FNV Mondiaal) [Read more](#)

Engaging the financial sector – practical steps and actions the sector can take

The need for adequate financial investigations and the need for the financial sector to take more action to address human trafficking and other serious forms of labour exploitation, is generally acknowledged and has led to several initiatives to engage the financial sector. The [Financial Investigations Tool](#), produced by OSCE working with the Liechtenstein Initiative, provides the public and private sector a catalogue of more than 600 indicators and typologies of human trafficking, as well as a guide outlining practical steps to initiate successful financial investigations of human trafficking. It forms part of the FAST Implementation Toolkit.

Another recent publication which was launched in New York on 27 September 2019, is the [Blueprint for Mobilizing Finance Against Slavery and Trafficking](#). The Blueprint sets out five Goals towards which financial sector actors can work through individual and collective action. There are 5 goals: Compliance with laws against modern slavery and human trafficking; Knowing and showing modern slavery and human trafficking risks; Using leverage creatively to mitigate and address modern slavery and human trafficking risks; Providing and enabling effective remedy for modern slavery and human trafficking

harms and Investment in innovation for prevention. Each Goal is accompanied by three 'Act Now' measures for immediate action, and three 'Initiate' actions that may have a longer gestation.



Practical application of the European Investigation Order - now in 22 EU languages -

The '[Joint Note of Eurojust and the European Judicial Network on the practical application of the European Investigation Order](#)' is now available in 21 additional EU languages. Originally published in English by Eurojust and the EJM in June 2019, the note is a compilation of information on the EIO and its application, gathered by Eurojust and the EJM during meetings, documents and casework. It includes examples of the common issues and challenges encountered by national authorities when using the tools, as well as possible solutions and best practice.

Examining the link between migration and exploitation

A [report](#) produced by IOM, Minderoo Foundation's Walk Free initiative and DFID, explores the connection between migration and modern slavery, and focuses on which migrants are most vulnerable, and in what circumstances, to modern slavery. The report examines the recent research literature on migration and modern slavery (published between 2014-2018) through a crime prevention lens, to identify a set of salient features that will help us better understand the relevant connections between migration and vulnerability to trafficking, forced labour, child labour, and modern slavery.

The International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and partners in several European countries published a comprehensive study [The Strength to Carry On: Resilience and Vulnerability to Trafficking and Other Abuses among People Travelling along Migration Routes to Europe](#). The authors found that in the context of the migration routes, the position of vulnerability of migrants arises from their need to use, and to pay for, migrant smuggling services, in a context of lack of alternatives for regular travel.

Limited Civil Society Space

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) launched another [survey](#) to collect data on limited civil society space. Earlier in 2018, FRA looked at the different types and patterns of challenges faced by civil society organisations across the EU, and highlighted problems and promising practices in a 2018 report, called [Challenges facing civil society organisations working on human rights in the EU](#). FRA complements this report with an [annual consultation](#) of the Fundamental Rights Platform, collecting real-life experiences of organisations.

Earlier the Competence Center for Nonprofit Organizations and Social Entrepreneurship at WU Vienna (Vienna University of Economics and Business) has conducted a [monitoring study](#) on the state of Civil Society in 16 countries in Central and Eastern Europe in collaboration with ERSTE Foundation and a group of country experts, by analysing the survey data.

What's new on the web ?

VIDEO: drivers for slave labour

The Polish TV channel TVN24 has released a documentary about Filipino workers who have been trafficked to Poland to work as drivers. The Dutch trade union FNV identified these cases, after being in contact with the workers and has been raising concern about the exploitation of migrant truck drivers in different European countries, including Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark. As a result several of these truck drivers have been identified as trafficked persons, or have received support to claim compensation and back wages. This [video](#) shows how they have been recruited from abroad, how they were forced to work under illegal circumstances and how they managed to ask for help and receive support from La Strada Poland.

Another [video](#) by the Solidarity Center shows that when workers are free to form unions, they can improve their workplaces and their communities by challenging the low-road route of supply chains and big corporations that tries to make low-wages, and poor working conditions the norm.

PAYOKE Like a Snowflake campaign

A new Instagram profile, named [likeasnowflakeaction](#), was launched in the week of the EU day against trafficking in human beings (18/10) and will be ongoing for a few months, pursuing the aim of raising awareness about human trafficking through the stories of victims. Stories and photos can be send to sefoir@fundacioapipacam.org or silvia.lamonaca@payoke.be to support the campaign.

Input requested for 2020 TIP report

The US governments launched a call for input for the next 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report. Anti-trafficking stakeholders are invited to [submit information](#) about new trends in human trafficking and key observations of the current trafficking situation; including examples of governments' successes and challenges in prosecution, victim identification and protection, and efforts to prevent and combat human trafficking. There is a particular request to reflect on the past two decades and share your views on the most consequential or pivotal measures governments have taken or leaps others have made within the anti-trafficking movement more generally. The deadline for submission of input is on January 15, 2020.

Forced Migration Review calls for articles on human trafficking and smuggling

The next Forced Migration Review issue 64 – to be published in June 2020 will include a feature on human trafficking and smuggling and launched a [call](#) for the submission of articles online. The deadline is 17th February 2020. The FRM editors are looking for concise, pertinent, practice-oriented, challenging articles that present analysis, lessons and good practice with wide relevance in particular in relation to prevention, identifying and protecting victims and analyzing policies and applying approaches and initiatives.

What's happening where ?

only a selection of upcoming NGO events is provided

- **16 January 2020** - OECD high-level policy forum: Building a Whole-of-Society Approach to Emerging Migration and Integration Challenges, Paris, France.
- **24 January 2020** - Rights, dignity and religion: responding to 'modern slavery' St Mary's Conference Centre, Sheffield, UK, You can [register](#) till 10 January 2020.
- **27 - 31 January 2020** - Doing Business Right Winter Academy: Due diligence as master key to responsible business conduct – see [registration](#) (there is a fee).
- **27 February 2020** - [National Conference On Combatting Modern Slavery And Supporting Victims Out Of Exploitation](#), London UK
- **30 – 31 March 2020** - High level Alliance Conference on THB organised by OSCE OSR – Vienna, Austria
- **20 - 27 April 2020** – 14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, to be held in Kyoto, Japan - The main theme of the Fourteenth Congress is “Advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda”
- **15 September 2020** – 25th anniversary La Strada – might be combined with LSI NGO Platform meeting

What's on your mind ?

The Dutch government has proposed a new Sex Work Bill, which criminalizes sex workers, their clients and business relations unless they have a license and are registered in a national register. The proposal was open for consultation till 15 December. SekswerkExpertise thinks this law will not help to combat trafficking and will aggravate the situation of sex workers and called upon sex workers and other stakeholders to submit their opinion on the draft law. In response to the reactions, the government may decide to change (minor) parts of the proposal. Please find the translated [sample letter](#) SekswerkExpertise drafted for organisations to help them send in a reaction. More information you can find on the website of SekswerkExpertise: <https://sekswerkexpertise.nl/>

La Strada International wishes you all a good 2020 and hopes to closely work with all of you to tackle human trafficking and other severe forms of labour exploitation.

2020 will be a special year. La Strada International will celebrate its 25th anniversary and in 2020 there will also be the 20th anniversary of the Palermo Convention, 40 years celebration of CEDAW and 25th years of Beijing Conference. Moreover it is 15 years ago that the Council of Europe Convention was adopted in Warsaw and there are ten years left to reach the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Our office will be closed from 20 December 2019 until January 6, 2020.

In 2019 La Strada International receives (project) funding from the European Commission, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ICCO/Church in Action and the Norwegian government and an Anonymous Donor. La Strada International members are supported by various other donors. We greatly appreciate financial support from private donors for our work. Visit our [website](#) to see how you can contribute to La Strada's work.