

With this quarterly newsletter, La Strada International wants to inform and update about developments in the field of trafficking in human beings and the activities of La Strada International and the La Strada member organisations. We welcome reactions and contributions. Please [mail us](mailto:info@lastrada-international.org) by **1 September 2009** if you have news, information about your organisation, a new report or documentary or an outspoken opinion on (inter)national developments.

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La Strada Macedonia nominated for Award for Social Integration

La Strada Macedonia (Open Gate) has been nominated and has successfully passed the first selection round for the ERSTE Foundation Awards for Social Integration with its project “Prevention campaign against trafficking in children”. La Strada is the only nominated organisation from Macedonia.

The winners from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia were selected from 71 projects shortlisted from a total of 1.300 applications. The ten winning projects and ten honourable mention awards will be presented at the award ceremony in Bucharest on 25 June. The winning projects and more information on the ERSTE Stiftung and its social integration award can be found on the [ERSTE website](http://www.erste-stiftung.org).

La Strada assembly meeting defines strategy and elects new board member

Between 13 and 15 May, La Strada held its bi-annual assembly meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria. Next to member updates, the assembly set the final steps for defining La Strada’s strategy for the coming three years. Further, social standards and La Strada principles were discussed in-depth, also to be finalised by the end of this year, when all relevant strategy and position papers will be available on the [La Strada International website](http://www.lastrada-international.org).

The assembly of La Strada International elected a new member to chair the board, namely, Ana Revenco, national coordinator of La Strada Moldova. She joins the two current board members Nadia Kozhouharova (treasurer), national coordinator of La Strada Bulgaria, and Jasmina Dimishkovska Rajkovska (secretary), national coordinator of La Strada Macedonia. The board oversees the implementation of the La Strada action plan in-between the assembly meetings and meets twice a year.



La Strada contributes to human rights impact assessment

La Strada International and [La Strada Czech Republic](#), together with the Scottish Prostitutes Education Project ([SCOTPEP](#)), are involved in a two year project to develop an impact assessment tool on human rights with regard to anti-trafficking policies. The project, entitled '[Assessment of the human rights impact of anti trafficking laws and measures](#)', is coordinated by [Aim for human rights](#), which also coordinates the online [Human Rights Impact Resource Centre](#), providing centralised access to a broad range of information and expertise on human rights impact assessment (HRIA).

Human rights impact assessment with regard to the anti-trafficking field is necessary because of the negative effects anti-trafficking instruments, developed within the criminal justice framework, can have on the rights of trafficked persons, many examples of which are outlined in the report '[Collateral Damage](#)' by [GAATW](#). Next to providing an instrument for NGOs to assess the human rights impact of anti-trafficking laws, project results will provide NGOs with evidence-based information to lobby their governments to achieve better human rights protection for trafficked persons and other affected groups.



The development of the tool is set up as a participatory process, involving the potential users of the instrument as well as key intermediary organisations. The latter play an important role in distributing the tool, as well as in supporting its application and using its outcomes for lobby and advocacy. A participatory process is imperative to ensure that the tool is user friendly and connects to the daily realities of the groups affected. Through a joint learning process, NGOs, grassroots organisations and experts will improve their knowledge and understanding of human rights and the relation between human rights and trafficking. The project will also enhance cooperation between groups that do not necessarily work together, namely, anti-trafficking NGOs, human rights organisations, labour organisations, migrants' rights organisations and sex workers organisations.

In the first year, the instrument will be drafted and tested by NGOs in several countries. The second year the tool will be reviewed, adapted and distributed. For more information about the project and the development of the tool, please contact 'Aim for human rights' at info@aimfrohumanrights.nl.

UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking: visit and recommendations to Poland & Belarus

Between 24 and 29 May, Ms Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, made a country visit to the La Strada member countries Poland and Belarus. In her [preliminary findings and recommendations](#) to Poland, Ms Ngozi Ezeilo positively notes the government's cooperation with stakeholders and countries as well as necessary legal amendments. However, she also voices concerns about the lack of comprehensive and unambiguous definition of trafficking in the Polish criminal law, barriers to the domestic application of the Palermo Protocol, a lack of capacity for labour inspectors to gain an effective oversight of trafficking in sectors other than the sex industry, unduly long judicial proceedings relating to trafficking cases, limited availability and access to social assistance by victims of trafficking especially in rural areas, and a failure to pay victims of trafficking compensation.

“LA STRADA WELCOMES THE SPECIAL RAPPOREUR'S RECOMMENDATIONS TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL RAPPOREUR AND IMPROVE PROTECTION MEASURES”



Joy Ngozi Ezeilo

[La Strada Poland](#) is pleased with having had the opportunity to meet and exchange information with the Special Rapporteur and in particular with her recognition of La Strada as a leading NGO and service provider in the anti-trafficking field in Poland. La Strada also welcomes the Special Rapporteur's recommendation to establish “an office of a National Rapporteur to coordinate and monitor all activities in relation to combating human trafficking”. This has been a demand by La Strada for several years and it is important that this lobbying effort is supported at the highest UN level. Although Poland's accession to the EU certainly changed trafficking routes, Poland had already been country of origin, transit and destination before EU accession in 1995, when La Strada was set up. La Strada believes the Special Rapporteur's recommendations to be very important not only in the Polish context, namely, the need to clearly elaborate on the definition of human trafficking, to improve identification of victims of trafficking and offer an unconditional reflection period, to compensate victims, to address the problem of trafficking for labour exploitation outside of the sex industry, to expand state funding to organisations that provide social, medical, legal and psychological assistance to victims, and last but not least, to ratify the [International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families](#).

[La Strada Belarus](#) also welcomed the opportunity to talk to the Special Rapporteur, who [visited Belarus on 24 May](#) and was informed about the functioning of the national hotline, run by La Strada. Joy Ngozi Ezeilo commended Belarus for its political commitment towards fighting human trafficking, as the country has introduced legislation and amended its criminal code as well as developing and implementing an action plan. Furthermore, she added that a high number of cases, also resulting in a high number of convictions, are being prosecuted. She pointed out some areas in which the country could improve, such as boosting assistance to victims, ensuring that victims are not stigmatised, and addressing domestic violence which can perpetuate gender inequalities that can increase people's vulnerability to trafficking. La Strada welcomes these and other recommendations, as they all touch on problem areas that La Strada identifies in its work with trafficked women and at risk groups.

La Strada Moldova focuses on domestic violence prevention

Based on an analysis of its hotline calls and a strong correlation between domestic violence and trafficking, [La Strada Moldova](#) decided to carry out an assessment on the situation regarding domestic violence in Moldova and develop a special prevention programme on the issue. Daniela Misail-Nichitin, deputy president of La Strada Moldova, says research studies have shown that one of the decisive factors when making a decision to go abroad and therefore be at risk of trafficking, is the existence of psychological or physical violence in relationships.

The goal of the research was to identify key actors, initiatives, and actions taken, as well as existing gaps with regards to domestic violence in the areas of prevention, public information, direct assistance and stakeholder coordination. Similar to the media coverage analysis on gender-based violence recently carried out by La Strada Belarus (see [LSI newsletter issue 12](#)), La Strada Moldova carried out an opinion poll on root causes of domestic violence, which identified a need for public education and awareness raising on the issue.

La Strada recommends the government, amongst others, to provide rehabilitative services to perpetrators to prevent additional abuse, to create and train multidisciplinary teams for domestic violence cases, to apply the National Referral System standards in providing protection and assistance to victims as well as potential victims (both in reference to human trafficking and domestic violence), and to carry out awareness-raising campaigns to change public attitudes towards this problem.

Preliminary actions for La Strada Moldova have also been identified, namely, to promote La Strada more actively in rural areas, where information and knowledge about services and actions is scarce, and to raise them to a higher level of quality, and align them with the European standards. [Contact La Strada Moldova](#) for more information.

La Strada Moldova publishes 'Handbook on Consulting by Phone'

What is a hotline? How is it administered? Which are the key principles of consulting and the duties and necessary qualities of a consultant? What is the step-by-step procedure of a common consultation by phone? Which psychological components can be recommended for carrying out consultations, how can the 'burn-out' syndrome of staff be prevented?

Answers to these and more questions are tackled in the [Practical Guide to Telephone-Based Counselling](#), recently published by [La Strada Moldova](#). Even though an increasing number of information sources has become available today, the telephone remains one of the most commonly used, as it is the most accessible and convenient. Furthermore, it allows for personal exchange and live dialogue with a specialist or consultant.



In all La Strada countries, the hotline has become one of the key tools for prevention, not only with regard to informing the population but also for identifying victims of trafficking and their needs for assistance and protection. In Moldova, where La Strada set up its hotline services seven years ago, those wishing to migrate are supported and informed on how to make a safe decision, and those who were trafficked are helped in escaping slavery-like conditions.

Victoria Dochitcu, coordinator of La Strada Moldova's hotline service, says that the handbook systematises knowledge, experience, and best practices accumulated over these past years. As such, it is not only useful to hotline staff but also those who wish to create new services. The manual combines theoretical knowledge with practical experience and fills a gap in the methodological literature on phone consultations, namely, with regard to the management of phone service rather than psychological aspects of phone consultation. As such, the handbook is a step-by-step guide on how to run and set up a hotline, covering technical aspects, criteria of personnel selection, the necessary tools and specific expertise.

ILO publishes indicators of human trafficking for labour and sexual exploitation

Resulting from a joint ILO-European Commission project, lists of [operational indicators of trafficking](#) (for adults and children for labour and sexual exploitation) were presented by the ILO at a Conference of EU National Rapporteurs on Trafficking in Human Beings entitled "[Joint Analysis, Joint Action](#)" in Prague on 31 March 2009, organised by the Czech presidency of the Council of the European Union (see also below).

The [four lists of indicators](#) can be used to assess the situation of a potential victim of trafficking with respect to each of the six main elements of the definition of trafficking in human beings as laid down in the Palermo Protocol, namely, deceptive recruitment (including transfer and transport), coercive recruitment, recruitment by abuse of vulnerability, exploitation, coercion at destination and abuse of vulnerability at destination. The indicators are accompanied by [explanations for indicators of trafficking for labour exploitation \(pdf\)](#) and [explanations for indicators of trafficking for sexual exploitation \(pdf\)](#) respectively. The indicators could also become reference tools for researchers and institutions in charge of data collection of trafficking in human beings in their country.

The indicators were obtained through a participatory process applying the so-called [Delphi methodology](#). The objective of the Delphi method is to produce a result based on consensus from a wide group of experts. Experts were selected from the 27 EU Member States from police, government, academic and research institutes, NGOs, international organisations, labour inspectorates, trade unions and judiciaries. La Strada was one of the consulted NGOs .

The indicators are intended to guide researchers and practitioners on the evidence that should be gathered when interviewing possible victims, but also labour inspectors, in their attempt to find out whether a specific worker should be considered a victim of trafficking (whether or not the case has been prosecuted as such). With regard to quantitative estimates, the indicators can guide national statistical offices in the production of national estimates, particularly in countries of origin when interviewing a representative sample of returned migrants.

EU Network of National Rapporteurs on Trafficking in Human Beings

The first six months of 2009, the Czech Republic held the chair of the European Presidency of the Council of the European Union. One of the main issues that the Czech Government addressed during its presidency was trafficking in human beings. On 30 and 31 March, a conference was organised in response to urgent calls for the establishment of National Rapporteurs or Equivalent Mechanisms, entitled "[Joint Analysis, Joint Action](#)" (see also the [Conference outcomes](#) published by the Council). The aim of the conference was to support cooperation and information exchange regarding the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings on the EU level, via enhancement of the role of National Rapporteurs or equivalent mechanisms within 27 Member States. The main topics of discussion were independence and autonomy of the mechanisms and data protection. As a tool for a closer cooperation, the Czech interior ministry created a special website, www.national-rapporteurs.eu, which contains information on national rapporteur structures in individual EU member states, including contacts, national websites, and basic national documents.

As a direct result of this Conference, the Council published its [Conclusions](#) on establishing an informal EU Network of National Rapporteurs or Equivalent Mechanisms. All Member States are invited to participate in an informal and flexible EU network of National Rapporteurs or equivalent mechanisms in order to improve the understanding of the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings and with a view to providing the Union and its Member States with objective, reliable, comparable and up-to-date strategic information in the field of trafficking in human beings.

The proposed tasks of the network should be the gathering of best practices and the development of indicators and criteria to improve the comparability and consistency of information related to statistics on trafficking in human beings. Further, the network should gather and analyse necessary qualitative and quantitative data related to trafficking in persons, which has been collected by National Rapporteurs or equivalent mechanisms in the course of their activities. The Conclusions state this process should respect the applicable rules on the protection of personal data.

La Strada International has always promoted the appointment of national Rapporteurs, as laid down in the [Hague Ministerial Declaration on European Guidelines for Effective Measures to Prevent and Combat Trafficking in Women for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation \(1997\)](#), and the idea of a network of European National Rapporteurs is interesting for exchanging best practices and developing indicators and criteria. La Strada's main concern is that only a few countries in the EU have a truly independent National Rapporteur, most countries have national agencies or working groups that are often led by the government. These agencies also implement and execute most of the anti-trafficking measures which makes them less suitable for monitoring the states' anti-trafficking policies. La

Strada International has repeatedly stressed the importance of independent rapporteurs and would therefore recommend the Council of the European Union to follow the example of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking, which demands from States to institute an independent rapporteur.

“Degrees of exploitation”: Trafficking and forced labour update

In response to the increasing convergence of labour, migration and anti-trafficking advocacy and research, La Strada provides an update on developments with regard to anti-trafficking efforts in the forced labour field.

In April, the [OSCE held a technical seminar on labour exploitation](#), in particular in the areas of identification, protection mechanisms, national coordination among the services or authorities, and prosecution of cases in the agricultural sector. Carolina O'Reilly of the International Labour Office said that trafficking for forced labour today is not usually about outright physical violence but that there are degrees of exploitation and many different and subtle forms of deception and coercion, rather than a clear-cut line between forced and free labour. The OSCE Special Representative [called on states](#) to devise both legal and practical effective responses to combat exploitation in agriculture.



“GLOBAL BRANDS
AND RETAILERS
HOLD THE KEY TO
END TRAFFICKING.”

Trade unions are also increasingly taking on the issue of trafficking into sectors other than the sex industry. Trafficking of workers and their subsequent slavery is a growing problem in the global garment and footwear industry which is increasingly resorting to the use of migrant labour, including trafficked child workers, says Neil Kearney, General Secretary of the [International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation](#). The Global Union ITGLWF therefore argues [businesses could end trafficking](#) by outlawing the employment of slave labour, and says big name brands should take the lead.

In a similar vein, the EU Parliament has passed a [Resolution on the social responsibility in subcontracting undertakings in production chains](#), urging the Commission to launch an impact assessment on the added value and feasibility of a Community instrument on chain liability as a way of increasing transparency in subcontracting processes. The EP is supported by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). The [ETUC welcomed](#) in particular the call on the European Commission to draft a legal instrument introducing joint and several liability to deal with the cross-border dimensions of subcontracting.

Finally, the [Global Trade Union Alliance to Combat Forced Labour and Trafficking](#) has started issuing [newsletters](#) informing about trade union activities to fight forced labour and human trafficking around the world. The Alliance is led by the International Trade Union Confederation and financially supported by the Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour of the International Labour Organisation. Their website offers best practices, an events calendar and news on trade union initiatives, such as [Unions in Croatia and Slovenia committing to develop a mutual agreement on assisting and protecting labour and social rights of migrant workers](#) in both countries and demanding from their respective governments the adoption of measures which will improve their housing and living situation.



EU policy update

The EU is currently developing the “Stockholm Programme” (2010-2014), that is the next 5-year plan for Justice and Home Affairs, expected to be adopted in autumn 2009. The programme will be based on the [Future Group report](#), which sets proposals and the overall context for the programme. Critics, such as the [European Civil Liberties Network](#), argue the Stockholm programme will build an enhanced pan-European system of security and surveillance that is “dangerously authoritarian”. According to the [Daily Telegraph](#), *civil liberties groups are particularly concerned over “convergence” proposals to herald standardise European police surveillance techniques and to create “tool-pools” of common data gathering systems to be operated at the EU level.* Repressive policies against undocumented migrants are another area of concern.

The programme also deals with trafficking in human beings. It is remarkable that the programme calls upon countries outside the EU to ratify and implement the relevant treaties, because although the majority of the EU members states have ratified the [Council of Europe Convention](#), the EU itself has not yet done so. Further, the recurring criminal justice themes of intelligence gathering, strategic analyses and border controls are emphasised. But the plans also

mention the protection of rights and recommend immunity from criminal prosecution, regularisation of stay for trafficked persons, development of compensation schemes, and assistance with reintegration into society in the country of origin. However, assistance is still made dependent on voluntarily return and serves to facilitate cooperation with criminal investigations.

With regard to the next policy steps concerning the Stockholm Programme, EU justice ministers will hold talks on the domestic security policy on 17 July. An initial proposal will then be put forward by the European Commission on which the European Parliament will be “consulted”. The European Council (27 Prime Ministers) will have the final say as to its content (see also [Statewatch Observatory](#) for updates).



On 22 April 2009, the European Parliament adopted an own-initiative [Report on a Common Immigration Policy for Europe](#), framing the EP's position on where it wants a common EU immigration policy to go in the near future. Key points include the implementation of a “burden-sharing mechanism” as envisaged in the [Immigration Pact](#), which was adopted by the European Council on 16 October last year and was controversially received by civil society for, amongst others, its plan to put an end to large-scale regularisation programmes for undocumented migrants. The EP wants to increase the “return” of irregular migrants, step up the fight against human trafficking, and reinforce financing for Frontex and its “capacity to act”.

What's new ?

ILO report on global patterns of forced labour and the “cost of coercion”

In a new study on the patterns of forced labour worldwide, the International Labour Office (ILO) says the “opportunity cost” of coercion to the workers affected has reached over USD 20 billion per year. The report, entitled [The Cost of Coercion](#) also details the growing number of unethical, fraudulent and criminal practices that can lead people into situations of forced labour, and calls for increased efforts to eradicate the practices. It also charts the progress on the international and national levels in reducing and preventing forced labour, but warns of the possible impact of the global economic and jobs crisis. See the [ILO press release](#) for more background information to the report.



Learning from Women's Rights Activists' Campaigns for Legal and Policy Change

How do activists communicate the need for legal and policy change through their campaigns for women's equal rights? What are some strategies for effective communication of campaign goals? The aim of this resource is to answer these questions by analysing activists' experiences in campaigning for women's equal rights. [Communicating Change: Learning from Women's Rights Activists' Campaigns for Legal and Policy Change](#) is based on data collected from 70 women's rights campaigns from around the globe and activists' experiences in campaigning. The report illustrates how activists have “framed” and communicated social, political, legal, and economic issues in order to improve women's rights. By focusing on the way that issues are framed, this resource helps to identify effective and persuasive techniques for broadening public and official support for women's rights campaigns.



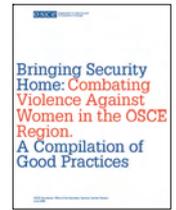
Resource kit for combating trafficking in children for labour exploitation

This guide, entitled [Combating trafficking in children for labour exploitation: A resource kit for policy-makers and practitioners](#), captures over 10 years of work by IPEC and its partners and makes the Programme's experiences and knowledge available to those who design, implement and improve policy and programming to fight child trafficking. It is composed of five separate but interrelated books that cover a range of themes. Accompanying the texts are more than 150 resources comprising publications.



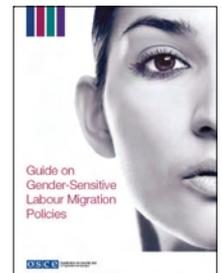
OSCE compilation of good practices to combat violence against women

[Bringing Security Home: Combating Violence Against Women in the OSCE Region - A Compilation of Good Practices](#) documents more than 95 good practices to help eliminate gender-based violence and highlights their impact in preventing violence against women, protecting victims and prosecuting offenders. Strategies for involving men and young people in anti-violence activities are also described. The compilation is published by the Gender Section of the OSCE Secretariat.



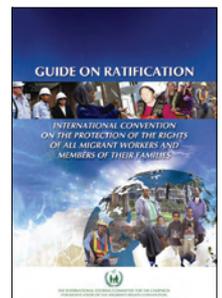
OSCE guide on introducing gender-sensitive labour migration policy

This [Guide on Gender-Sensitive Labour Migration Policies](#) was presented at the [OSCE 17th Economic and Environmental Forum](#), held in Athens between 17 and 20 May and analyses gender issues in contemporary labour migration. The report highlights the rationale for including gender-sensitive measures and ways to implement them into the migration policies of countries of origin and destination, as well as in bi- and multilateral agreements. It follows a rights-based approach and says gender-sensitive labour migration policies should include women's rights to legal migration opportunities, women's rights within the migration process (e.g. to safe and secure recruitment, fair remuneration and decent working conditions) and women's rights realised through migration, such as increased autonomy and self-confidence to negotiate better terms of employment and to have control over their earnings.



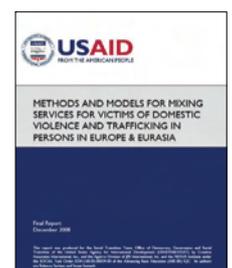
Guide for states and policy-makers on ratifying the Migrant Rights Convention

A user-friendly [Guide on the Ratification the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families \(ICRMW\)](#) has been prepared by the International Steering Committee for the Campaign for Ratification of the Migrants' Rights Convention. According to the ILO, the guide "fills a big gap and really tells the story - why this convention is important, why it needs to be ratified, and why the arguments against it are just hot air". As such, it provides a summary of the Convention and discusses the process of ratification, outlining the pros and cons of ratification as well as refuting various misconceptions about the Convention. The guide also discusses the two complementary ILO conventions on migrant workers and migration for employment that, together with the ICRMW, comprise a "Charter on International Migration".



Mixing services for victims of domestic violence and trafficking?

The study [Methods and models for mixing services for victims of domestic violence and trafficking in persons in Europe & Eurasia](#) considers service models for victims of trafficking in persons (TIP) and domestic violence (DV) in the Europe and Eurasia. It aims to outline best practices with regard to support for both groups, which meets their individual and specific needs while taking into account the limited, and sometimes diminishing, resources available for these services. The study examines the various types of victim-centred services available, those dedicated either to victims of DV or TIP and those where services for the two groups are mixed. Also considered is the extent to which these services are available and accessible to the two target groups. The report was produced for, amongst others, the Social Transition Team of USAID and the NEXUS Institute and written by Rebecca Surtees and Susan Somach.



Armenian trade unions devise strategy to prevent trafficking

The Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia (CTUA) published a paper entitled [The Strategy on Labour Migration, Combating Human Trafficking and Forced labour of Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia \(2009-2012\)](#). The paper emphasises that the role of trade unions in protecting migrants is very important as they organise language trainings, establish information centres for migrants, give migrant workers an opportunity to participate in trade union work and communicate with their home country, and thereby can prevent their exploitation and risk of becoming trafficking victims. Amongst others, the CTUA is planning to create a contact telephone number and website for migrants from the Republic of Armenia working abroad and for returned migrants who suffered from exploitation.

Online resources

IOM provides return information for migrants

The IOM has launched a [new website](#) “to provide migrants in Europe with unbiased and up-to-date information on return and reintegration opportunities in their countries of origin”. Whilst independent information-provision to migrants, whether they wish to return to their home countries or remain in the EU, is certainly necessary, it is questionable whether this IOM initiative is based on the interests of migrants or on that of receiving states. Nevertheless, for those who do wish to return, this website might contain useful contact details on government agencies and NGOs that might provide some support.



Council of Baltic Sea States launches website on anti-trafficking task force

The Council of the Baltic Sea States, a political forum for regional inter-governmental cooperation, has launched a [new website on the work of the Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings \(TF-THB\)](#), which “counteracts trafficking in human beings in the Baltic Sea Region through preventive and protective activities”. The site contains details on its Trainings for Diplomatic and Consular Personnel, its Regional Information Campaign as well as regional legal analyses, factsheets, and information on data collection and research.



What's happening where ?

- **24-26 June Geneva, Switzerland** Consultative workshop of three UN human rights mandates (Special rapporteurs on child prostitution, trafficking and slavery) regarding the coordination of their work
- **25-26 June Lisbon, Portugal** Victims in Europe, Portuguese Association for Victim Support
- **July (no date yet) Vienna, Austria** ECPAT European meeting

What's on your mind ?

Migrant Domestic Workers aim for a strong rights-based ILO Convention on Domestic Work

Fe Jusay is the coordinator of the European RESPECT network. She has been working for the Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers (CFMW) since its institution in 1985, where she coordinates the women's programme and facilitates the self-organisation of migrant domestic workers in the Netherlands.



Marking more than 10 years of work, the European RESPECT [1] network is entering a new phase, which includes addressing the current trends in EU immigration policy in relation to Migrant Domestic Workers (MDWs), building new alliances and developing new campaign strategies. The coming years, RESPECT will focus on lobbying for MDW rights within the upcoming ILO Convention on Domestic Work.

As the economic downturn persists, restrictive migration and employment policies based on freezing the issuing of work permits (amongst others, in [Malaysia](#), Australia and Thailand) or offering financial incentives to encourage unemployed migrants to return home (for example [Spain](#) or the Czech Republic) are multiplying. The current global political context and the prevailing immigration regimes in Europe demand campaign strategies that combine short and long-term proposals. Therefore, RESPECT campaigns for changes in labour and immigration policies which address the daily working and living conditions of MDWs, while pursuing a long-term vision of a rights-based labour and immigration framework for all those working in private households, both women and men, whether documented or undocumented. One significant expression of this has been the development and popularisation of the *Charter for the Rights of Migrant Domestic Workers* [2], which was developed in an early RESPECT initiative with the participation of migrant domestic workers in six European countries.

The ILO proposal to develop a *Convention on Domestic Workers* and the ongoing inter-governmental process of the *Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)* provide new opportunities to place the rights of MDWs on the political agenda. We see these developments as a major opportunity in the political calendar to interact with processes and to expand understanding and analysis on the intersection between migration and labour. Also, we want to use the opportunity of the Domestic Worker Convention to put forward key political messages: Domestic work as proper work; Protection of labour rights for MDWs; Possibility to migrate as MDWs; Regularisation of undocumented MDWs; Ensure the inclusion of MDWs in the ILO Convention.

With the development of the ILO Convention and in the mobilisation around the GFMD, the RESPECT campaign is committed to project a strong rights-based approach that is multi-ethnic, non-racist and inclusive. This includes:

Strengthening, empowering and capacity building of migrant women: Ensuring that those working in the domestic sector become the key actors in the campaign for their rights. In our European network MDWs have organised and transformed themselves into significant transnational social actors.

Articulating new campaign strategies: Despite the conditions of exploitation and denial in migration policy, migrant domestic workers are articulating new strategies to claim their human rights and gender justice and put forward proposals for an alternative development in which they can play a significant role.

Giving visibility to the role and voice of MDWs: highlighting the importance of the contribution of migrants and in particular MDWs in the process of the ILO Convention, in particular with regard to development: migrants, particularly women, have become a major source of foreign currency earnings for their home countries and their families.

Migrant Domestic Workers as Transnational Social Actors: With the devastation of livelihoods and the environment and unprecedented impoverishment in the South, people are claiming migration as a survival strategy and have become stakeholders of their own development, whilst contributing enormously to societies of residence and origin.

Building new alliances: RESPECT, together with the *Asian Domestic Workers Assembly (ADWA)* and *Migrant Forum Asia*, have set up an International Working Group (IWG) to strengthen the MDW voice in the campaign for the ILO Convention and to link with trade unions and other campaigns addressing the ILO Convention. In this context, RESPECT highlights that both undocumented and documented MDWs are a particularly vulnerable group of migrant workers. Many European countries do not recognise domestic work in private households as 'proper work', and therefore not as a category for immigration. The private household eschews labour laws and organisation and MDWs are often exploited and abused by their employers. MDWs are often denied their basic rights and are frequently forced to become undocumented, leading to social exclusion, invisibility and vulnerability to abuse.



Migrant Domestic Workers have different but related strategic needs and concerns. They share the strategic demands for protection of their rights as migrants (recognition of domestic work as a category of immigration) and as workers (core labour standards in their work place, such as contracts, sickness leave, or access to social benefits). Women MDWs also have gender specific demands (reproductive health needs or trainings on gender-based violence). Men MDWs need specific education on female gender-specific issues, but also need to make themselves visible, as gender stereotyping often renders them invisible as domestic workers in the private household.

From our perspective as migrants, and specifically as women, we believe that both "productive labour" carried out in factories and offices, and "reproductive labour" carried out in private households are two sides of the same coin and that both are essential to the national and global economy. Placing the campaign for the respect and actual implementation of the human rights of all migrants (and refugees) on the political agenda of the countries that we live and work in as well as on the international agenda - as migrants, women and workers - is a challenge to all of us.

For more information, you can contact RESPECT at eurespect@gmail.com, tel: ++31-634204226; ++31-20-6646927 or look for updates on www.respectnetworkeu.org

[1] RESPECT is a Europe-wide campaign network for the Rights of Migrant Domestic Workers, set-up in 1998, that aims to empower and facilitate the development of MDW transnational self-organisations and networks. It comprises the MDW self-organisations TRUSTED and OTRADELA, the Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers (CFMW) and RESPECT NL (Netherlands), Babaylan (France), GRAAL (Portugal), RESPECT Berlin (Germany), the Migrant Rights Center (MDW Section, Ireland), KASAPI HELLAS (Greece), Filipino Chaplaincy & Samahan (Belgium), KALAYAAN, Justice 4 MDWs and UNITE (UK).

[2] The Charter for the Rights of Migrant Domestic Workers was developed through a Europe-wide Consultation process with migrant domestic workers organised in six European countries and launched in 2000.



In 2009, La Strada International receives its main structural financial support from the Dutch Foundations ICCO and CORDAID, the European Commission (Daphne III) and the Sigrid Rausing Trust as well as specific project or coordination grants from Mama Cash, the King Baudouin Foundation (KBF) and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. La Strada members are supported by various other donors. We greatly appreciate financial support from private donors for our work. For more information on how you can contribute to La Strada's work, please [consult our website](#).