Walking 300 miles for La Strada International

In November, Freedom to Walk convened 17 volunteers from around the world to walk for 370 kilometres (300 miles) over 15 days from Bangkok to Myanmar, to raise funds and awareness for five organisations working to stop human trafficking on five continents. La Strada International is Freedom to Walk’s European beneficiary. The campaign raised USD 126 028.

La Strada International has followed the developments around Freedom to Walk over the last months with great interest. The LSI secretariat and members admire the efforts of the group of committed people and heartily thank all the participants for their contribution and support. LSI congratulates everyone with the positive final results. The walk has definitely supported the work of our organisation and in particular our continuous call for attention to the rights to protection and support for trafficked persons and the promotion of the implementation of human right standards for them. With the money raised, LSI can improve its assistance and support services for trafficked persons, and continue to raise awareness and prevent human trafficking. See the column of this
CoMensha calling on students to raise awareness
In 2009, CoMensha/La Strada Netherlands started the campaign “Don’t close your eyes” which is renewed every year in different formats. The slogan of the campaign, “Don’t close your eyes. Think about exploitation” raises awareness for human trafficking in The Netherlands. In November CoMensha launched a new campaign, challenging students and young people to create their own videos to raise awareness about human trafficking and exploitation in The Netherlands.
CoMensha is calling on young people between the ages of 15 and 25 to submit their own (animated) two-minute video clips, bringing attention to the invisible suffering of victims of human trafficking.
By taking part in the contest, young people can show their involvement in the fight against human trafficking. A jury will select the three best videos, which will be shown at a special conference organised by CoMensha and publicised on the campaign website. The winner of the first prize will be sent on a three-day educational trip to Budapest, Hungary.
For more information contact Bernd Timmerman.

From secure accommodation to social inclusion
Open Gate (La Strada Macedonia) published a new research “From secure accommodation to social inclusion of victims of trafficking in human beings”. This research focused on three main issues: the social and economic situation of trafficked persons involved in the Social Assistance Programme; the process of supporting trafficked persons; and the institutions involved in the support of trafficked persons and the level of the established cooperation. The research makes several recommendations related to improvement of the assistance to trafficked persons on the national level. Some of them include: The planning and provision of technical, human and financial resources need to be established at a state institutional level in order to provide adequate social support to victims of human trafficking in accordance with their individual needs. Preventive activities should be undertaken if the family is likely to be a risk factor for the person to become a victim of human trafficking. More efforts should be made to detect (labour) exploitation through sophisticated means for the identification of victims of human trafficking and the prosecution of traffickers. The publication was officially promoted on the EU Anti-Trafficking Day and presented to a wide audience of governmental and nongovernmental officials in Macedonia.

Documentary of the Tree workers case
On 21 September 2012, the documentary “The Tree Workers Case”, directed by Daniela Agostini, had its premiere at the American Centre in Prague. The so-called “Tree Workers Case” revealed in the Czech Republic, is referred to as the biggest case of labour exploitation exposed in Europe in the last twenty years. It involved at least 2 000 workers, mainly from Vietnam, but also from Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovakia and Ukraine, who had been forced since 2009 to work under extremely harsh conditions in the state forest of the Czech Republic. In response, a group of lawyers and members of NGOs in Prague (including La Strada Czech Republic) joined forces to investigate this case and claim compensation for the forest workers. See also the LSI newsletter issue 21 from June 2011.

The actions of the legal/NGO team also led to the making of a documentary. The production company Inter/Aktion and La Strada Czech Republic organised the screening of the film followed by the post-screening discussion with Czech and international experts at the American Centre in Prague. “The film pays attention to the biggest case of labour exploitation in the forests of the Czech Republic, while the Czech authorities are not able or willing to do anything about the case.
The film is of great importance for us as it significantly helps to create a kind of pressure on the rigid Czech authorities," says Irena Konečná, Director of La Strada. So far, the Czech police, government ministries and other authorities say that their hands are tied and that they cannot do anything. La Strada Czech Republic hopes that with the documentary more public awareness can be raised about the case and hopefully still those responsible can be convicted and compensation can be paid to the victims. The film was screened at a Warsaw Film Festival and at the Austrian public ORF III channel since the premiere here.

Data protection for trafficked persons
In November LSI started a project on data protection for trafficked persons with KOK, the German nationwide activist coordination group combating trafficking in women and violence against women in the process of migration. The project aims to promote the rights of trafficked persons to privacy and autonomy and to protect the use of their personal data. LSI and KOK seek to empower exploited and abused persons to take action against irregular storing and sharing of their personal data. The project will raise awareness among NGO counselling centres in selected European countries to stress confidentiality between the counsellor and trafficked persons and to assist service providers in providing safe information according to European data collection procedures. Additionally, it will create alliances for data protection among the relevant stakeholders, including NGO counselling centres, National Rapporteur Mechanisms (or equivalent structures), IGOs and national data protection authorities.

The project will contain a research, develop joint standards and include consultations, trainings and a final manual. The project is funded by OAK Foundation. For more information please contact La Strada International.

La Strada Ukraine develops performance indictors on the implementation of the Ukrainian human trafficking law
La Strada Ukraine, together with the Ministry of Social Policy and participation of experts from international organisations, developed performance indicators for the Ukrainian national law on human trafficking. The law, which was adopted in September 2011 after a lengthy process, is now in force for more than a year. In order to improve the implementation of the law and the national policy on combating trafficking in human beings in general, it was decided to develop a system of indicators for monitoring its implementation. A draft document containing the indicators has been submitted to the National Coordinator on Combating Human Trafficking for support and approval. La Strada Ukraine hopes that the Ukrainian government will ensure that the indicators will be made part of the unified state system for monitoring the implementation of the law on human trafficking. For more information contact La Strada Ukraine.

Results of three years COMP.ACT
In 2010, the COMP.ACT project, initiated by La Strada International and Anti-Slavery international officially started, with secured funding for three years by the European Commission and the Belgian foundation King Baudouin. During these three years, project coordination focused on working with the partners to bring about systematic and practical changes to ensure that those trafficked in Europe receive compensation for their suffering and unpaid labour.

All project partners (14 NGOs in 14 European countries, including several La Strada offices) have conducted research on the existing possibilities and the identification of obstacles in systems and procedures that prevent those trafficked from accessing compensation. The partners have formed national coalitions on compensation, and presented recommendations to ensure greater access to justice for trafficked persons. Several partners have engaged with legal services to support their clients in compensation claims and with law firms to inform the legal community on the right to compensation.

Internationally, the COMP.ACT campaign worked to include the matter of compensation in the anti-trafficking agenda of intergovernmental organisations. Compensation is now covered by the EU Directive on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting the victims EU/2011/36 and the issue of compensation is addressed in all the reports of GRETA (the monitoring mechanism of the Council of Europe Convention).

The final report of the first three years of the COMP.ACT project is a Toolkit on Compensation - a collection of the results and products that the COMP.ACT partners have developed. The first part is a narrative overview introducing the COMP.ACT coalition and provides information on compensation for trafficked persons and recommendations on removing obstacles to obtaining compensation.
Part Two of the Toolkit contains pull-out tools that COMP.ACT has developed for practitioners who work with or for trafficked persons, including:

1. **A Research Template** for NGOs to conduct a country-level study on compensation. The guide outlines: 1. Data collection regarding the access of trafficked persons to compensation, 2. Analysis of barriers in the access at the national level and 3. Formulating recommendations to strengthen victims’ ability to assert their right to compensation.

2. **A Poster on compensation possibilities**, designed for professionals and practitioners who in their work come across and work with trafficked persons, for example, police, shelter staff, trade union officers, (legal) counselling centres and lawyers. The poster highlights what issues need to be discussed when consulting a client, possible legal avenues and available channels to seek compensation.

3. **A Guidance on representing trafficked persons in compensation claims**, which provides lawyers, counselling centres and other service providers with information on the rights and needs of trafficked persons, including the ways of claiming compensation for both material and non-material damages, a detailed overview of the international legislation and include a simple 5 Step Model for claiming compensation for trafficked persons.

The Toolkit will be available on the COMP.ACT website.

The drafts of the COMP.ACT products have been successfully presented at two international events. On the 11 October COMP.ACT was invited to organise a Special Focus Event prior to the **Alliance against Trafficking in Persons Conference** in Vienna hosted by the OSCE Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.


Despite the successes of COMP.ACT - the concrete results, and several funding applications, LSI has not succeeded in securing funding to launch a follow-up project to implement the right to compensation into practice with the current and new partners in Europe. Nevertheless, COMP.ACT intends to continue raising awareness on the issue of effective remedies for trafficked persons and looks for opportunities for further cooperation and support. Anyone interested to join, or to support the continuation of COMP.ACT, please contact **La Strada International**.

**Final conference: ENPATES**

The European NGOs Platform against Trafficking, Exploitation and Slavery (ENPATES) project aimed to establish a Pan-European platform for anti-trafficking NGOs to develop an effective coordination strategy for NGOs and to set up a system for the functional exchange and development of analysis, knowledge, good practices, and advocacy initiatives in the field of prevention, assistance, protection and social inclusion of trafficked persons. The project, which was initiated by nine anti-trafficking NGO’s from nine EU Member States, including La Strada International, has gradually involved more anti-trafficking NGOs of EU Member States but also from candidate countries and other European countries.
In November, a final conference, as well as the last Steering Committee meeting and an Assembly meeting, were organised in Rome, Italy.

Over the last two years, within the framework of the project, ENPATES conducted an assessment of NGOs needs and collected and analysed data for NGOs, including information and knowledge on the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings, policies and practices (see Resource centre available on the website www.enpates.org). A website and an NGO online discussion forum were created too. ENPATES also published different position papers including an analysis, recommendations and guidelines for NGOs’ anti-trafficking work. At the moment, 27 anti-trafficking NGO’s have officially joined the Platform, representing 25 different EU countries.

At the above mentioned meetings, the efforts and results of ENPATES were evaluated and a discussion was held on the future and sustainability of ENPATES. Although, initiated as a project with funding from the European Commission, ENPATES hopes to continue as a platform in the future and to ensure continuous information and the exchange of best practices between NGOs in the anti-trafficking field. The first members meeting and final conference already provided space to further discuss content issues, such as NGO experiences regarding the implementation of the EU Directive on human trafficking (2011/36/EU); transnational cooperation among NGOs; prevention of re-trafficking and on inter-institutional protocols/agreement aiming at the protection of victims. At the meeting, results of different concrete NGO projects were also shared. For more information, please contact On the Road.

**CSO Commentary on the EU strategy**

On the occasion of the 6th EU Anti-Trafficking Day on 18 October, La Strada International, together with CCME, Terre Des Hommes, ECPAT, Anti Slavery International, KOK and Lefö; presented the Civil society Commentary on the EU strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings. In the Commentary, the NGOs offered a number of recommendations and observations to guide the implementation of the strategy over the next years. The commentary focused on a number of key activities best undertaken by the EU, as well as activities that require implementation on a national level. It also highlighted a number of issues that require further elaboration in order to be implemented in accordance with a human rights-centred approach.

**La Strada Ukraine will launch a National Toll-Free Child Hotline**

From January 2013, La Strada Ukraine will start operating the National Toll-Free Child Hotline, although there is no donor support yet for this hotline. The hotline will have a national scope: the number 0 800 500 225 can be accessed in the whole country and is free of charge. The hotline aims to provide an opportunity to all Ukrainian children to be heard and supported. Earlier, in 2011 the other National Toll Free Hot Line on Violence Prevention and Child Rights Protection of La Strada Ukraine became the associate member of Child Helplines International (CHI, the world-wide network of child helplines). In 2013 the separate National Child Hotline will gain full membership at CHI.

**What’s going on?**

**International Migrants Day Statements**

On 18 December 2012, International Migrants Day, PICUM called on the EU and its member states to reconsider policies which criminalise undocumented migrants as well as the advocates and professionals working to ensure their human rights.

The economic, social and political crisis that afflicts Europe has caused a devastating increase of anti-migrant rhetoric and marginalised and vulnerable foreign workers, on which our recovery depends, continued to be disadvantaged, criminalised and chased. Policy makers pursued punitive measures which lower acceptable standards for labour, family and social rights. Migrants and their families faced increasing acts of racist and xenophobic violence. In the statement, PICUM refers to the 2012 message for International Migrants Day of the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon: 

“When migration policies are developed without attention to vulnerability, marginalization and discrimination, millions of migrants become cheap, disposable labour, the scapegoats for failed economic and social policies, and even casualties in an ill-defined war against “illegal migration”
As human mobility becomes more complex, and the journeys taken by many migrants more perilous, it becomes all the more urgent to forge national policy responses that address migration based on human rights principles.”

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If the rights of undocumented migrants are to be respected within European borders, Europe must reclaim the foundations on which it was built, including principles of equality, solidarity, dignity and non-discrimination to ensure that rights become reality for all.

The EU Commissioner for Home Affairs Cecilia Malmström makes clear in her statement that “Migration is part of our past, present and future. It has always been, and always will be a part of what makes Europe, and if looked upon as an opportunity rather than a threat, migration can help us grow stronger - economically, culturally and morally. Today, and even more so in the future, migration and mobility are crucial for growth and for Europe’s economic recovery.” Ms Malström acknowledges that facilitating labour migration must go hand in hand with preventing vulnerable migrants in irregular situations from exploitation by targeting employers who take advantage of their precarious positions. Also, she sees the responsibility of the EU to break through the scepticism about immigration and show political leadership to counter the common misconceptions fuelled by xenophobic and anti-immigrant rhetoric.

GRETA Members (re) elected
The membership of the first members of GRETA (the Group of experts who monitor the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings) will expire at the end of 2012. Therefore, at its 9th meeting (12-13 November 2012), the Committee of the Parties to the Convention held elections for 13 members of GRETA from a pool of over 40 candidates from all states that are party to the convention. Selection criteria included geographical and gender balance, as well as multidisciplinary expertise, competences in the fields of human rights, assistance and protection of victims and action against trafficking in human beings or having professional experience in the areas covered by the Convention. Importantly, GRETA members must be independent and impartial in the exercise of their functions.

Five of the current GRETA members were re-elected for a second term of four years, and eight new members were elected for the first time.

LSI is proud to announce that among the newly elected members is Kateryna Levchenko, the director of La Strada Ukraine. Ms Levchenko has extensive professional experience in combating and preventing human trafficking and in providing assistance to trafficked persons. In the international field of anti-trafficking, she is a well known advocate for the human rights approach and has featured as a highly respected speaker at numerous international conferences and meetings discussing the issues of human trafficking, women’s rights and children’s rights. Ms Levchenko was a member of the Ukrainian Parliament from 2006 to 2007 and in 2008-2010 she was an Advisor on human rights and gender issues to the Minister of Interior. In addition to her work for La Strada Ukraine, she has been involved in the work of numerous other government and non-government organisations, such as the office of the Ukrainian Ombudsman, ECPAT, Soros Foundation and others. La Strada International is happy with this recognition and wishes Katya success in this important job of promoting and upholding the human rights of trafficked persons.

New Directive on victims’ rights adopted
The EU Directive establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime was adopted by the EU Council of Ministers and published in the Official Journal on 14 November 2012. The proposal for the Directive was tabled by the Commission in May 2011; the European Parliament endorsed it with an overwhelming majority on 12 September 2012. Victims of crimes committed abroad may face serious problems due to differences between cultures, languages and legal frameworks. The Directive aims to ensure that whatever the crime - mugging, robbery, assault, rape, harassment, hate crime, terrorist attack, or human trafficking -
and wherever it is committed in the EU, all victims should enjoy the same basic rights in criminal proceedings, and are to be treated with respect and dignity with access to victim-support services, justice and compensation. Furthermore, the Directive requires that all states must provide access to the services deemed necessary by the individual assessment of necessary care for victims of crime (ranging from psychological support to legal advice) even throughout the criminal proceedings. It is made clear that victims are to be made explicitly aware of their rights in a suitable language, and they are to be actively included in the proceedings.

La Strada International is very pleased that the European Parliament amended the proposal of the Commission by including undocumented victims, of which LSI lobbyed for in its recommendations for amendments and in its joint statement with PICUM last year.

Member States are obliged to have transposed the Directive by 16 November 2014. In order to better coordinate the implementation process amongst the 27 EU countries, some Members of the European Parliament have decided to call on other MEPs to sign a written declaration on coordination and assistance in the implementation of the Directive.

6th EU Anti-Trafficking Day Conference

To mark the 6th EU Anti-Trafficking Day, the Cyprus EU Presidency and the European Commission organised a high level conference in Brussels on 18 October 2012. The conference “Working together towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings: the way forward” focused on the recently adopted EU Strategy on Trafficking in Human Beings and aimed to serve as a forum for the exchange of views on shaping future actions to strengthen cooperation, victim protection and assistance, prevention and prosecution in the field of trafficking in human beings. The Commission seized the occasion to urge Member States to transpose the new EU legislation on trafficking in human beings in a timely manner and to implement concrete and practical measures, in order to effectively address this issue. A side event organised by the DG Home Affairs - Anti-Trafficking Unit provided an opportunity for informal discussions on establishing a platform for civil society organisations and service providers.

La Strada International and many of our partners strongly support the wish of the Commission to promote and facilitate strong networking amongst civil society. The logic of a civil society platform of service providers who work on victim protection and assistance in member states and selected third countries is rooted in the need for (better) cooperation between such actors. Given the existing issue-driven cooperation between such actors, on the one hand, and the huge diversity of actors on the other, it is recommended not to aim at one umbrella structure, but to give support to the activities of NGOs and the networking between different civil society actors and different sectors (including unions and migrant rights organisations). The platform(s) should be fully independent.

At the side event it was suggested by a number of NGO’s that a realistic feasibility study and cost-benefit analysis should be undertaken before launching this platform initiative.

Actions for stronger support to end violence against women

To mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November, Members of the European Parliament initiated a written declaration calling on the European Union to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on violence against women. As soon as the written declaration receives the signatures of half of the MEPs, it will enter into force and be considered a strong political statement of the European Parliament.

The Council of Europe Convention is the first European-wide convention to provide a comprehensive legal framework to address the many forms of violence against women. Protection, prevention and prosecution measures, as well as partnership with women’s organisations, are foreseen in the Convention. By ratifying it, the EU will send a clear signal that violence against women is not acceptable in the 21st Century.

The ratification by the EU of the Convention would furthermore serve to ensure the legal commitment of all the Member States, and encourage them to individually sign, ratify and implement the text.

The Social Platform (an alliance of representative European federations and networks of NGOs active in the social sector) has issued a position paper calling on the EU to take measures to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence, including violence against women and girls. The
position paper calls on the EU to adopt an EU strategy to end violence against women and girls that encompasses comprehensive European legal instruments and actions toward eradicating all forms of male violence against women in the EU. It calls on the EU to make 2015 a Year to end violence against women and girls and to develop other long-term, funded and EU-coordinated campaigns. Finally, it calls on the EU and its Member States to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

In October, the Global Fund for Women, together with Women Against Violence Europe/WAVE delivered 10,000 signatures in support of the Convention to the Council of Europe’s Secretary General Thorbjoern Jagland. In less than six months, through joint efforts, thousands of people were mobilised to add their voices to the campaign for ratification of the Council of Europe’s Convention On Preventing And Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence.

Also, on 25 November, the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) released a press statement calling for urgent measures to end violence faced by ethnic minorities and migrant women in Europe. Numerous female migrant domestic workers in Europe face not only miserable wages and indecent working hours, but also physical and psychological abuse by their employers. ENAR’s yearly Shadow Reports on racism also highlights many such examples of exploitation and abuse in “typical female” occupations such as domestic work and prostitution. This year ENAR called on trade unions, employers, public authorities, policy and decision makers to address and combat these unacceptable violent patterns and to ensure services to support victims of violence are accessible to all ethnic minority and migrant women, irrespective of their legal status.

**Review Mechanism for Palermo Protocol postponed**

The LSI Newsletter has several times paid attention to the GAATW advocacy campaign for a Victim Centred Review Mechanism so that states’ efforts for the implementation the obligations of the Palermo Protocol are monitored. In 2008, at the UNTOC 4th Conference of the Parties, national governments acknowledged that without an effective monitoring mechanism it was difficult to measure progress made in implementing UNTOC. At the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties in October 2012 in Vienna, a decision was made.

GAATW members were present to undertake final advocacy actions to meet minimum requirements of transparency and inclusivity necessary for the review mechanism to be relevant to trafficked persons. GAATW delivered two interventions and a statement that detailed occasions in which UN human rights and criminal justice forums have recognised the need for civil society participation in the anti-trafficking response. For a majority of countries worldwide, civil society not only assists governments in their implementation of the Trafficking Protocol, but also takes the lead in this regard. It is disturbing that governments would even contemplate designing a mechanism for its review that would limit the involvement of civil society. Victims of organised crime, (including human trafficking) deserve more accountability from states parties and the UN. Although some states back a meaningful realisation of these guiding principles even under pressure to compromise to achieve consensus; throughout the process other governments have blocked possibilities for civil society participation in a review mechanism and refuse the release of reports from the review.

But the main deadlock proved to be the funding model for the process, specifically whether a mix of regular UN budget together with voluntary contributions from States, or just the voluntary contributions alone is sufficient to fund the project. GAATW views the latter as unsustainable approach to what needs to be an ongoing process.

In the end, States agreed an amendment to the “omnibus resolution” (Ensuring effective Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto) encouraging everyone to continue working towards a review mechanism. However at this point GAATW does not expect to see any further work on this matter until the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties in 2014. For more information contact [GAATW](http://www.gaatw.org).
Fighting trafficking is everyone’s business
The UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings, especially women and children, Ms Joy Ezeilo has dedicated her 2012 report to the issue of trafficking in person in supply chains, discussing both state obligations and cooperation responsibilities to prevent and combat the problem. She stresses the importance of labour laws to protect workers from exploitation and indicates that weak enforcement of applicable laws, rather than their provisions, often gives rise to risks of trafficking in many States. The report also refers to the California Transparency in Supply Chains Act which requires every retailer and manufacturer with annual worldwide revenues in excess of USD 100 million to disclose on their websites information about their efforts to eradicate slavery and human trafficking from their direct supply chains. The Special Rapporteur also stresses in the report that immigration laws could also contribute to preventing migrant workers from being trafficked into supply chains. Increasing opportunities for legal, gainful and non-exploitative labour migration is a measure that States must take to prevent trafficking in persons. In fact, a lower incidence of trafficking is reported where opportunities for regular migration are available within a multilateral framework or under a bilateral agreement between the sending and receiving States, or where there are otherwise established channels of migration.

When addressing corporate responsibility, the Special Rapporteur refers to the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which were endorsed by the Human Rights Council in 2011. She notices that with the growing recognition of the influence of the private sector in preventing and combating trafficking, voluntary codes of conduct on human trafficking that specifically target corporations are being developed. Although this is an encouraging development, LSI stresses for a voluntary code of conduct or initiative to be effective in preventing human trafficking in supply chains, it is not sufficient for it to simply state a commitment to combating human trafficking. It should, at a minimum, provide for the undertaking of a risk assessment to map out all actors involved in the supply chain and identify where the risks of human trafficking may be present. This should be followed by the development and implementation of a high-level, company-wide policy prohibiting trafficking and trafficking-related acts at all levels of the supply chain. The implementation of the policy by all suppliers should be monitored and assessed by social auditors who are properly trained on the issue of human trafficking. Policies should also contain a set of remedial measures that companies should take if trafficking cases are found in supply chains such as referral to victim support agencies and ensuring victims’ access to grievance mechanisms. In developing corporate strategies to prevent and combat trafficking in supply chains, businesses should also consult and cooperate with civil society organizations with expertise in trafficking issues.

MRCI campaign on Ireland ratifying domestic workers ILO convention 189
Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (MRCI) launched a campaign on 13 November 2012 to call on the Irish Government to commit to introducing new international labour laws that protect women working in private homes. The Irish Government voted for this law in Geneva in 2011, and the campaign is now calling on the Government to bring it into effect. MRCI has found that up to 10,000 migrants in Ireland work in private homes, that there have been 40 reported cases of forced labour involving women working in private homes since 2008, and that this sector has the highest number of reported cases of trafficking for forced labour- 50% of which are cases involving embassies.

Global Forum on Migration and Development
The sixth edition of the Global Forum on Migration and Development took place in Mauritius, with the civil society participation days prior to the government participation days from 21-22 November 2012. The Forum was created by states after the event: High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, in 2006. It is formally outside the UN structure, constituting a non-binding consultative process open to observers. On 22 November 2012, the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, François Crépeau, stated that migrants’ rights should be a central pillar of the agenda of the Global Forum on Migration and Development and highlighted that, due to the limited ability of civil society organisations to participate effectively, the Forum is not yet
“fulfilling its potential to become a fully inclusive forum which anchors the human rights dimension of migration”. Sir Peter Sutherland, the UN Secretary General’s Special Representative on Migration, expressed his concern for providing assistance to all migrants and stated: “[...] we need to do something urgently about the human price of irregular movement. [...] and migration has to be integrated into the post-2015 development architecture”. UNODC’s Executive Director, Yury Fedotov, who is also the current Chair of the United Nations inter-agency Global Migration Group called for more regular migration channels to be made available in order to reduce the threats currently posed by irregular migration and for countries to safeguard the fundamental rights and freedoms of migrants and their families through human rights-based migration policies. He also stressed that all victims of crime - irrespective of their migration status - need to be provided with support, assistance and protection.

More than 100 civil society organisations presented a “5 Point Plan for Strong Civil Society Involvement” for the upcoming High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development (HLD), which will take place in September 2013.

New resources on indoor sex work

The **INDOORS project** carries out an analysis of the working and living conditions of female sex workers in a number of EU countries. The project was carried out between January 2009 and December 2012, within a partnership of nine organisations in nine member states of the European Union: Austria, Bulgaria, France, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain.

The project developed a number of products targeted at sex workers, support programs and the broader public. In the he book: **Pictures of a Reality**, sex workers talk about their life and work experiences within the indoor sex work setting in nine European cities. A **European guide** provides a tool for the for the empowerment of sex workers. The **Report** describes the working and living conditions of indoor-based sex workers in nine European cities.

**UNODC Global Report 2012**

In the framework of the Global Plan of Action, the UN General Assembly mandated UNODC to publish a Global Report on Trafficking in Persons every two years, starting in 2012. **The Global Report: 2012** provides an overview of patterns and flows of trafficking in persons at global, regional and national levels, based on trafficking cases detected between 2007 and 2010 (or more recent). The report also includes a chapter on the worldwide response to trafficking in persons. The Country Profiles of the Global Report present a national level analysis for each of the 132 countries covered by this edition of the report.

People are trafficked around the world for sexual exploitation, forced labour, begging, petty crimes, removal of organs and other exploitative purposes. Between 2007 and 2010, victims from at least 136 countries were detected in 118 countries worldwide. Because of this diffusion, as well as the hidden nature of trafficking crimes, it is difficult to estimate the size of the problem. Many countries have recently passed legislation criminalising trafficking in persons as a specific offence. However, definitions of human trafficking vary, as does the capacity to detect offenders and victims. There is a general increase in the number of prosecutions and convictions globally, however the overall criminal justice response to trafficking in persons appears to remain very weak.
GRETA’s second General Report
GRETA, the Group of Expert that monitors the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against trafficking in Human beings, published its 2nd General Report for the period August 2011 to July 2012, based on the first ten reports and the visits to the next 10 countries to collect information necessary for establishing its monitoring reports.
In its 2nd report, GRETA stresses general satisfaction with the way in which the evaluation procedure has been carried out in the first 10 countries, which demonstrated willingness to make progress in combating trafficking in human beings, and to ensure that their obligations under the Convention are fulfilled. At the same time, GRETA’s reports highlight the need for further steps to ensure that the human rights-based and victim-centred approach underpinning the Convention is fully reflected and applied in the national policy to combat trafficking in human beings.

GRETA supports the notion that the human rights-based approach to action against trafficking in human beings requires States to set up a comprehensive framework for: 1. the prevention of trafficking, 2. the protection of trafficked persons as victims of serious human rights violations, and 3. the effective investigation and prosecution of traffickers. Such protection includes steps to ensure that all victims of trafficking are properly identified by authorities. It also involves measures to empower trafficked persons by enhancing their rights to adequate protection, assistance and redress; including recovery and rehabilitation in a participatory and non-discriminatory framework irrespective of their residency status. GRETA stresses that a person’s identification as a victim of human trafficking should not depend on the presence of elements necessary to initiate a criminal case or co-operation between the trafficked person and law enforcement authorities.

Further, measures to prevent human trafficking should be taken in the field of socio-economic, labour and migration policies. Another aspect of the victim-centred approach is the need for effective legal remedies for victims of trafficking (including children). Parties to the Convention must provide for the right of victims of trafficking to access compensation from the perpetrators, as well as adopt legislative or other measures to guarantee compensation for victims from the State. At present, even when there are possibilities in law for granting compensation to victims, in practice this right remains theoretical and few victims benefit from existing compensation schemes. Additionally, GRETA expressed concern regarding the limited freedom of movement experienced by trafficking victims when they are under the care of social services. During visits to certain shelters, GRETA observed what appeared to be excessive limitation of the personal liberty of victims and disrespect for their privacy. GRETA stresses the need for greater awareness among staff working with victims of trafficking as regards the need to respect the confidentiality of victims’ personal data and privacy.

Transnational referral
The International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) published the report: “The Way Forward in Establishing Effective Transnational Referral Mechanisms in Trafficking Cases. A Report Based on Experiences in South-Eastern Europe”. The report concludes a six-year process (2006-2012) of developing and implementing Transnational Referral Mechanisms (TRMs) within the “Programme to Support the Development of Transnational Referral Mechanisms for Trafficked Persons in South-Eastern Europe (TRM)” and the project: “Enhancing Transnational Cooperation on Trafficking Cases in South-Eastern Europe (TRM-II). Both projects were funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by ICMPD.

The newly published report provides an overview of the forms and tools of transnational cooperation used in cases of human trafficking in South-Eastern Europe (SEE) with a view to further enhance their implementation within and beyond the region. Although the report specifically targets SEE, it also serves as a tool to all countries that have embarked on the process of developing a transnational referral mechanism of trafficked persons, or those who are considering the development of such a mechanism. By summarising the lessons learned in the process of developing TRMs, this report intends to support countries by moving from theoretical frameworks towards the implementation of concrete actions to further improve the referral of trafficked persons in a wider European context.

Victim identification and assistance in the Balkans
Fafo (the independent research foundation of the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions) and the NEXUS Institute have published four studies on victim identification and assistance in the Balkans in the context of the joint project: Improving Services to Trafficked Persons,
Leaving the past behind? When trafficking victims decline assistance
The report summarises the main factors that contributed to trafficking victims’ decisions to decline assistance, and provides some practical recommendations which can be operationalised by anti-trafficking professionals and service providers.

A fuller picture: Addressing trafficking-related assistance needs and socio-economic vulnerabilities
Questions raised in this paper include: What do trafficking victims themselves see as important and useful assistance in order to be able to recover and move on from trafficking? To what extent are these needs being met within the existing assistance system? and how could interventions better respond to their different needs?

Out of sight? Approaches and challenges in the identification of trafficked persons
This report discusses and analyses challenges in victim identification based on interviews with victims of trafficking in Albania, Moldova and Serbia.

No place like home? Challenges in family reintegration after trafficking
When the exploitation of a trafficked person ceases, victims may face a new set of challenges as they make efforts to return and integrate into their home environment. A critical aspect is the victims’ relationship and interaction with their family. Multiple vulnerabilities can create additional strain on the family system, which in turn, diminishes the ability to function as a safety net and a welfare provider.

Protecting Rights and Ensuring Justice
The PICUM report Strategies to End Double Violence Against Undocumented Women Protecting Rights and Ensuring Justice, seeks to reaffirm undocumented women’s access to rights by bringing together the laws, policies and practices that exist in Europe to affirm the dignity and address access to support and justice for those without legal status. The examples in the report show how restrictive laws can be changed in favour of undocumented migrants based on real practice in Europe. The initiatives featured here were selected due to their innovative approach in overcoming the various barriers to information faced by undocumented women in their search for fundamental rights to dignity, justice, gender equality and a life free of violence. This research also revealed areas requiring further attention. For instance, there is a significant need to engage with international and regional monitoring and reporting mechanisms to guarantee undocumented women’s rights. Also, there is a notable absence of initiatives involving documented and undocumented men with the aims of building gender equality and a mutual understanding. The report also aims to inform readers about the realities of undocumented women and their experiences with gender violence. Seeking to strengthen the women’s movement, it emphasises the core principles of equality and equal rights and highlights means to overcome the administrative and financial barriers that may prevent the adequate support and protection of undocumented women.

What does ‘Abuse of position of vulnerability’ mean?
In 2012 UNODC published an issue paper to clarify the key concept of abuse of a position of vulnerability as a means of trafficking in persons in the definition contained in Article 3 of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol. Drawing on interviews with practitioners from 12 States (amongst others: Belgium, the Netherlands, the Republic of Moldova, Switzerland and the United Kingdom and finalised with input received during an expert group meeting), two products were developed: the issue paper and a corresponding Guidance Note that aims to assist criminal justice officers in penal proceedings.

Female Migrants in Europe
The research Paradoxes of Integration: Female Migrants in Europe that was conducted in the series of International Perspectives on Migration, analyses the lives of new female migrants in the EU with a focus on the labour market, domestic work, care work and prostitution in particular. It provides a comparative analysis that embraces eleven European countries from Northern (UK, Germany, Sweden, France), Southern (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, Cyprus) and Eastern Europe (Poland,
Slovenia), reflecting old and new immigration countries as well as old and new market economies. It maps labour market trends, welfare policies, migration laws, patterns of employment, and the working and social conditions of female migrants in different sectors of the labour market (formal and informal). The research particularly addressed strategies migrant women use to counter the disadvantages they face. It analyses the ways in which gender hierarchies are intertwined with other social relations of power in European counties; providing a gendered and intersectional perspective while drawing on the biographies of migrant women.

Call for papers on Border controls
The Anti-Trafficking Review (an initiative by GAATW) is addressing the role of border controls in anti-trafficking responses. Issue 2 of the journal will include a ‘debate’ section specifically looking at how borders and national security measures make migration more costly, more difficult and of higher risk. It will also highlight how aspects of border interventions may help to prevent trafficking and uphold human rights. Contributors to the written debate are asked to address the positive and/or negative implications (including but not limited to human rights) of the following aspect of Article 11 of the Trafficking Protocol and Article 7 of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings: “States Parties shall strengthen, to the extent possible, such border controls as may be necessary to prevent and detect trafficking in persons.”

Specific attention should be focused toward the question: What should the role for border controls in the anti-trafficking response be, if there should be a role at all?
Contributions should be no more than 4000 words, including footnotes and abstract, and sent to submissions@gaatw.org by 15 January 2013. Please see the Style Guide before submitting.

What’s new on the web?

Video deconstructing human trafficking step by step
The United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking (UNIAP) has released a video that clearly outlines the process by which people fall victim to human trafficking. Topics also covered by the clip include the criminal aspects of trafficking, various ways victims are exploited, and lessons learned for the more effective recovery and reintegration of victims.

Destination unknown
The International Federation Terre des Hommes launched a thematic website ‘Destination Unknown’. The website is part of an international campaign to protect children on the move, which is supported by partners who will join forces to develop protection mechanisms for migrant children. The aim of the group effort is to raise awareness and promote for policy change. The website also offers an array of information, tools and expertise on the phenomenon of child mobility, such as: field-based information, project results, policy analysis, research, news and events, civil society organisations’ positions and expert views. With Destination Unknown, Terre des Hommes is committed to promoting the protection and best interests of the child whenever she or he moves away from home.

TrustLaw webpage on trafficking
TrustLaw, the global hub for free legal assistance, news and information on good governance and women’s rights, has launched a special webpage on human trafficking and modern day slavery. The page includes videos, interviews and articles including an article on the London Olympics called “The sex-trafficking event that wasn’t”.

Rightingfinance
On 10 December, a task force of human rights organisations and networks united in “A bottom up approach to righting financial regulation” initiative, launched the website rightingfinance. The initiative devotes itself to highlighting the globally growing concern of the impact of financial regulation on human rights. Since the eruption of the recent recession in 2008, human rights experts, monitoring bodies, social movements and different civil society organisations have become increasingly vocal on the connections between financial patterns and human rights. In the European context, the task force believes that budget cuts are steps backward in fulfilling human rights commitments, and come in the throes of budgetary commitments of some EUR 4.5 trillion made to rescue financial institutions. The website will serve to capture views from a human rights
perspective on all areas of financial regulation, such as financial sector taxation, derivatives regulation and the impact of hedge funds and private equity funds.

What’s on your mind?

Tanny Chingtong: Looking Back at (how we organised) Freedom to Walk

“Looking back, I think it was our determination, each other, and people around us that made Freedom to Walk possible and successful. We were determined to make it happen while at the same time recognised that we did not know everything”.

*Tanny Chingtong (left) teaches law at the Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok and is a co-founder of Freedom to Walk.*

I had not been able to sleep well for the past weeks, neither had Ali (the other co-founder). We took turns worrying about what could possibly go wrong and how we could prevent it. We would learn later that it was somewhat counterproductive because anything could go wrong and it is okay to stray off plans here and there.

“Freedom to Walk is a campaign to raise funds for and awareness about the global efforts to combat trafficking.” The words rolled out of my mouth the way human bodies breathe in air; it had become a second nature to us to spread the word to whomever listened. Some people thought we were insane. They were probably right. After all, it takes a bit of insanity to change the world.

The idea came about when Ali mentioned it would be nice to explore Thailand on foot. We agreed that it should also be for a cause, something we believed in. At the time, Ali was an intern at the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women, and I was teaching at the Faculty of Law, Chulalongkorn University. The idea of raising awareness about the issue of human trafficking, a crime that deprives humans of their most fundamental rights, among which is the freedom of movement, resonated well to the both of us.

The following day, we sat down and talked about what we wanted the Walk to be. Human trafficking exists in various industries: textile, fishing and so on. Yet, most people associate it almost exclusively with prostitution. We also recognised that the issue has unique characteristics in different regions of the world, and therefore, would require different approaches. So we saw an opportunity for the Walk to be a platform for educating the public about human trafficking so that they can talk about it in the right dialogue with a deeper understanding. In addition, we also believe that anybody could be a part of the change they want to see. Freedom to Walk, we thought, should be able to not only set the right dialogue about human trafficking, but should also offer an individual a practical and meaningful way he/she can contribute to the change. More importantly, we would like to support the existing non-profit organisations around the world who have been doing wonderful works in combating human trafficking in their regions. On 2 January 2012, Freedom to Walk started to take shape.

To have an idea, we have learned, is not enough; one must have a strong determination to realise it as well. Throughout the whole process, we had received more no’s than yeses. We approached potential sponsors the way we approached most things - full on and head first. We learned quickly that as much as people love doing good, they are reluctant when it involves giving away their own money, and that we needed a better approach. We reached out to everyone we knew, even strangers who, now, have become friends.

Looking back, I think it was our determination, each other, and people around us that made Freedom to Walk possible and successful. We were determined to make it happen while at the same
time recognised that we did not know everything. This acknowledgement, I think, is crucial because it kept us grounded, hungry for knowledge and made us learn to receive help when we needed it. The people we surrounded ourselves with also played an important role in putting the Walk together. Our friends and family showed tremendous support throughout the process. Our Walkers, volunteers from 12 countries, have been active and enthusiastic to fundraise and get involved and spread the word within their own communities. Without these people, we could not have done it.

In the morning of 3 November, after eleven months of planning and readjusting the plan, I decided to get out of bed at 5AM after six hours of attempted sleep. My heart could not stop racing. Anything could go wrong, but we would be okay, I said to myself.

At 6.15AM, I arrived at the starting point, the beautiful Ananthasamakhom Throne Hall stood proudly in front of me. Volunteers slowly arrived wearing Freedom to Walk t-shirts and big smiles on their faces. Ali arrived shortly after. We saw each other, and I knew that everything would be okay.

*Freedom to Walk convened over 17 volunteers from the inner city Bangkok to the Three Pagodas Pass, at the Thai-Burmese border, and raised 126 028USD in total.*