



LA STRADA INTERNATIONAL - EUROPEAN NGO NETWORK AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

BELARUS, BULGARIA, CZECH REPUBLIC, MACEDONIA, MOLDOVA, THE NETHERLANDS, POLAND, UKRAINE

ANNUAL REPORT 2016

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www.lastradainternational.org

ABBREVIATIONS

AECT - Alliance Expert Coordination Team

CoE - Council of Europe

GRETA - Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings

GAATW - Global Alliance against Traffic in Women

HRDN - Human Rights and Democracy Network

ICMPD - International Centre for Migration Policy Development

ILO - International Labour Organisation

IOM - International Organisation for Migration

LS - La Strada

LSI - La Strada International/The International La Strada Association

NGO - Non-Governmental Organisation

OSCE - Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

PICUM - Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants

UNODC - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

LA STRADA INTERNATIONAL

The International La Strada Association (known as La Strada International/LSI) is a leading, value-driven European NGO Network that aims to achieve a world without trafficking in human beings by promoting the respect for human rights through policy, advocacy, information and research and coordinated action. LSI develops the capacity of the member organisations and other stakeholders to improve services to trafficked persons and at-risk groups and empowers them to have access to and exercise their rights.

Currently, La Strada International is formed by eight member human rights organisations from Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Macedonia, Moldova, the Netherlands, Poland and Ukraine. Next to the members organisations, La Strada works with close partner organisations in Europe, who are united in the LSI NGO Platform - United against trafficking in human beings. Currently, LSI's NGO Platform - United against Human Trafficking in Europe - comprises 29 organisations from 24 European countries. All independent, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Europe that work from a grass-roots level, providing direct support to trafficked persons.

With these organisations, we share values such as the human rights approach to anti-trafficking strategies and a non-abolitionist view on sex work. We cooperate on projects on specific rights issues, such as compensation and awareness raising. The international secretariat also provides services to partner organisations such as capacity building and trainings.

The International Secretariat undertake activities directed at international networking, advocacy and public relations, and is responsible for developing and maintaining relations with national and international government structures and other relevant stakeholders including international organisations, NGOs and civil society networks. The secretariat further works on data collection, registration and information provision and capacity building for the member organisations. The LSI Secretariat prepares Assembly and board meetings and is further responsible for coordination of the implementation of common strategy and action plans. Additionally several international projects are coordinated by the International Secretariat.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN EUROPE

Human trafficking¹ is a serious human rights violation, and combating this crime remains a priority in Europe today. Several Central and Eastern European countries, in which La Strada operates are faced with political, social and economic instability, bureaucracy and corruption. La Strada countries generally face high levels of unemployment. This, combined with the lack of adequate social welfare systems forces people to move or migrate internally or abroad. Next to economic reasons, people also leave because of corruption or discrimination or other serious human rights violations including armed conflict outside and in Europe, like currently In Ukraine.

Human trafficking reflects the poor social and legal position of individuals in many countries. Human trafficking in particular affects people working at the margins of the formal economy, with irregular employment or migration status. Human trafficking is not a static phenomenon; changes and new trends in trafficking practices are discernible over time. There is an increasing recognition throughout the world that it is not only women and children who fall victim to traffickers. Trafficking of adult men seems to be primarily for the purpose of labour and thus links closely with another trend already noticeable in the last years; an increase of trafficked persons exploited in industries other than the sex industry.

Such industries known to be vulnerable for human trafficking, forced labour and exploitation are domestic work, sweatshops, catering and restaurants, construction, agricultural work, entertainment industry and the commercial marriage market. Despite the difficulty to accurately determine the scale of the issue, it is evident that thousands of people are being trafficked within, to and from Europe every year.

La Strada International has consistently advocated caution and critical awareness when using data to measure human trafficking, including using data to justify the development of measures and policies. Data collection on such a complex phenomenon as human trafficking has proven to be extremely difficult and inconsistent. Although many reports that present data do give out warnings not to consider this data as the 'absolute truth on human trafficking', they have been endorsed by many but at the same time criticised by others.

¹ Article 3, paragraph (a) of the [Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons](#) defines Trafficking in Persons as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

ESTIMATES ON FORCED LABOUR AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

In December 2016, **UNODC** published its 2016 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons. The report provides an overview of patterns and flows of trafficking in persons at global, regional and national levels, but does not provide an overall estimation on the amount of identified trafficked persons globally. The report found that 49% of the registered victims of human trafficking were adult women and 33% were children. The majority of victims were trafficked for sexual exploitation (53%), while 40% were trafficked for forced labour. It is interesting to note that while in Europe, Africa and the Middle East, most people were trafficked for sexual exploitation, in the Americas they are equally trafficked for sexual and labour exploitation, while in Asia most cases related to trafficking for labour exploitation.

According to the most recent estimates of the **International Labour Organisation (ILO)**, which related to forced labour published in 2012, around three out of every 1000 persons worldwide are in situations of forced labour at any given point in time. The ILO estimates that 20.9 million people are victims of forced labour globally; trapped in jobs which they were coerced or deceived into and which they cannot or are unable to leave. The majority of forced labourers, (68%) are exploited in economic activities, such as agriculture, construction, domestic work or manufacturing. About a quarter are victims of sexual exploitation. The remaining ten percent are in state-imposed forms of forced labour, for example in prisons, or in work imposed by the state military or by rebel armed forces.

In 2016, the **Walk Free Foundation** published an update of the Global Slavery Index, estimating that 45.8 million people are in some form of modern slavery (which includes human trafficking, forced labour, child labour and early/child marriage) in 167 countries globally. The Global Slavery Index provides a map, country by country, of the estimated prevalence of modern slavery, together with information about the steps each government has taken to respond to this issue. In September 2017, UNODC, Walk Free Foundation and ILO plan to present new common estimations on 'modern slavery' including human trafficking and forced labour.

The European Commission's second statistical report on victims and traffickers for the years 2010-2012 showed that during this 3 year period 30.146 identified and presumed victims were registered in Europe, so an average of around 10.000 persons annually. As in the previous years, the majority of victims were trafficked for sexual exploitation, were female and were EU citizens. Sixteen percent of the registered victims were underage.

ADDRESSING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

La Strada International recognises trafficking in human beings as a very complex phenomenon and sees the need for a broad understanding of the intersections of migration, development, labour market and social policies in trafficking in human beings. Human trafficking has its roots causes in global inequality, (gender)discrimination, oppressive social structures, exclusion, poverty, political instability and (armed) conflicts leading to large groups of people, including migrants and refugees, to seek work, safety and stability away from home. These root causes, next to the demand for cheap labour and products, globalisation and deregulation of labour, have made workers more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. The growing anti-migration sentiments and even xenophobia by both public and politicians in many countries could cause further discrimination of migrants leading to condoning situations of exploitation and abuse. Policy measures - taken within the criminal justice framework - are often still only focussed on fighting crime, restricting migration and repressing prostitution, harming the rights of trafficked persons and vulnerable groups.

To end trafficking in human beings the structural root causes need to be addressed. We understand that by doing so we are also targeting powerful economic, political, social and cultural structures and interests. Being critical does have its effect on the independent position of NGOs in certain parts of the region, who often find themselves under attack. On the other hand we see more and more businesses and consumers being critical about exploitation in their supply chains and in the products they buy. It is crucial to embrace these efforts for (corporate) social responsibility and are looking for ways to engage in these movements for structural change.

La Strada's core work is dedicated to the rights of trafficked persons and affected groups through awareness raising, prevention, assistance and advocacy. At several occasions in 2016, LSI - together with others - raised concern about the new EU Agenda on Migration, as well as other political, social and economic changes, reported by La Strada members, impacting negatively on human rights, the human trafficking situation and La Strada's work. Positive changes reported related in particular to revision, signing, ratification or adequate implementation of (anti-trafficking) legislation, however LSI members and partners also continue to report inadequate (implementation of) legislation on human trafficking. Further, the increasing abolitionist voice in Europe, which calls for criminalisation of prostitution, which LSI opposes, is a continuous challenge, requiring quick actions and response to measures taken at EU and national level.

LSI STRATEGIES FOR 2016 - 2020

In 2015 a new Strategic Plan for 2016 - 2020 was adopted, after a thorough evaluation of complemented actions and outcome of the Strategic Plan for the period 2012 - 2015. This new Strategic Plan presents the key strategies that LSI will employ in the coming years to ensure that trafficked persons' rights are recognised, respected and realised. La Strada's strategies include providing access to services and justice, advocacy for change and building partnerships and movements. In order to ensure that our work is effective and to obtain a clear understanding of the effectiveness and impact of our work, La Strada tries to better monitor and evaluate its activities as an integrated part of our work and aims to develop a Europe-wide NGO monitoring system on implementation of rights. It further supports the development of new and adequate, qualitative and sustainable services based on needs and quality standards set. La Strada International aims to strengthen the organisation, believing that it can take up an even more leading role in the anti- trafficking field, by building the capacity of grass-roots on issues such as data protection, access to justice and compensation, helplines and monitoring; human rights laws and monitoring bodies. But also by representing them at the international political level, while ensuring that their concerns and recommendations based on experiences of trafficked persons are heard. In 2016 LSI increased its visibility by putting more focus on its social media presence and international campaigns, while also collecting information, conducting research and reporting to raise attention for concerns and recommendations.

In order to ensure strong European cooperation and a strong and critical voice of rights-based anti-trafficking organisations, LSI continues to discuss the needs and options for the revision of the structure of both the network and the platform and the role of the LSI secretariat. As expressed and supported by members of LSI board and Assembly, extension of the network is needed to operate effectively at the European level and to ensure a stronger NGO voice.

LSI has not only invested much in the strengthening of the LSI NGO platform and cooperation among members, but also in become more financial sustainable to remain independent, which means looking for other donors and alternative financial support. As we believe in the flexibility and stability of grass-roots work of independent NGOs and the strength of joint actions and active cooperation, La Strada builds bridges to social movements and donors working on human, women, migrants and labour rights. We are critical and determined in our advocacy for rights and we are open and inviting to seek opportunities to work side by side with international organisations in a collective efforts for change for a just and fair world, including developing strategies to engage with businesses and public on corporate social responsibility.

LSI PROJECTS IN 2016

In 2016, LSI was part of two international research consortiums, established for two EU funded FP7 research projects; TRACE, coordinated by TRI in London, UK and DemandAT coordinated by ICMPD in Vienna, Austria.

- [TRACE](#), which finished in April 2016, focussed on researching the criminal enterprise aspect of human trafficking, including research on perpetrators and criminal groups, modus operandi and trafficking routes, trends, technology and the wider trafficking enterprise.
- The [DemandAT](#) research, which continues until June 2017, addresses the challenge of understanding demand for trafficking in human beings and analyses the policy and practical measures that can influence this demand.

In 2016, LSI was further partner in the [Balkan ACT Now II](#) project, coordinated by the NGO ASTRA in Serbia. In the framework of this project, which was finalised in November 2016, an NGO monitoring tool was developed, as well as curricula, trainings and feasibility studies on access to justice and compensation (funds). In the framework of this project, LSI launched a campaign on access to justice, on 18 October 2016, EU anti-trafficking day.

In September 2016, LSI started the project [Rights at Work, tackling labour exploitation](#) in all economic sectors in Poland, Romania and Bulgaria. This project in particular aims to increase identification and referral of cases of labour exploitation of migrants via research, capacity building and closer cooperation between trade unions, anti-trafficking NGOs and migrant right groups and advocacy towards governments and the private sector. The project, funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, continues until August 2018.

Next to these project, LSI played a consultancy role for several projects coordinated by members and other partners, including a regional prevention programme in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, that La Strada implements with IOM.

JUSTICE AT LAST - ACCESS TO COMPENSATION FOR TRAFFICKED PERSONS

In the framework of the Balkans ACT NOW II project which focussed on monitoring national anti-trafficking policies and the improvement of access to compensation for victims of human trafficking and other violent crimes, LSI and 32 other members and partners launched the campaign 'Justice at Last - Access to compensation for trafficked persons'. The aim of the campaign was to raise awareness of the right to compensation and urge European governments to implement ten action points that will remove obstacles and improve access to compensation.

Although compensation is a guaranteed right by the Council of Europe Convention and the EU Directive, in practice it remains woefully underutilised. There are many obstacles that prevent trafficked persons from seeking and obtaining compensation. There is lack of awareness among the police and judicial system and criminal and civil proceedings are often lengthy and costly. Traffickers are not found, not prosecuted or have moved their assets to avoid seizure and confiscation. The irregular status of a person, or their work in the sex industry, are other obstacles. Furthermore, even when trafficked persons are awarded a compensation claim, they are usually responsible for enforcing the order themselves.

LSI ADVOCACY & PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The lobby and advocacy work of LSI is planned according to LSI's strategic plan and annual Action Plan and its separate lobby plan, but also involves ad hoc work such as reacting to new European developments, actions and campaigns, or supporting the LSI members with reacting to relevant national developments. Obtaining or improving access to State resources for victims of human trafficking was prioritized in lobbying activities in La Strada member countries in 2016. Additional lobbying activities were conducted regarding more effective implementation of legislation, accessibility of assistance to both citizens and foreign national victims of human trafficking and adoption and/or implementation of a National Referral Mechanism (NRM). Challenges most frequently reported by LSI members included lack of adequate victim identification, absence of adequate assistance and or access to legal support and compensation, lack of good coordination between service providers and law enforcement and in general inadequate implementation of legislation.

The main gaps identified in implementation of such legislation were bureaucratic challenges, lack of state funding, inadequate training of law enforcement and service providers and disproportionate responsibility on accessing resources and providing services to victims falling on national and international nongovernmental organizations. For example La Strada Ukraine acknowledged the poor coordination among government ministries. The military conflict in Eastern Ukraine and the country's 1.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) diverted the government's attention and resources from anti-trafficking action, which has resulted in an over-reliance on NGOs to raise awareness, assist victims of trafficking, and promote legislative reform to comply with international standards. Several LSI members continued to raise concern about the fact that new strategies and policies lack sufficient resources to ensure good implementation.

Next to concerns La Strada member reported also positive news about their country's national approach to human trafficking, including the adoption and implementation of Action Plans and measures in 2016. La Strada members were in general positive about their cooperation with the state bodies and felt they could satisfactorily contribute to development of actions.

At national and international level, La Strada took up actions around the ratification and implementation of European legislation, including the EU Victim Directive and EU directive on human trafficking, provided recommendations for the Post-2016 EU Strategy on human trafficking;

COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATION

To date, all LS member countries have ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings CETS No 197, except the Czech Republic. In 2016, the Czech Republic finally ratified the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Further, all the EU countries transposed the Directive 2011/36/EU on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings².

A report published in 2016 by the European Commission on the transposing of EU member states with the EU directive revealed that the level of prosecutions and convictions for human trafficking in Europe remains worryingly low. It further notes that an excessive burden is placed on victims both before and during criminal proceeding and that victims are refused assistance at police stations or misidentified as offenders, and subsequently prosecuted and convicted. Providing unconditional access to assistance, support and protection to victims remains also a challenge for most Member States. Further, Member States and NGOs identified the limited resources available for anti-trafficking measures, victim assistance and prevention measures at national level.

The International Secretariat also closely followed the monitoring work of the Council of Europe's monitoring body GRETA and its reports, as well as the elections in September of new GRETA members, calling upon NGOs to take action and get engaged in the national selection procedure in their countries.

² DIRECTIVE 2011/36/EU OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA in 2013.

LSI NGO PLATFORM AND GAATW RESPONSE TO WRITTEN CONSULTATION ON THE POST 2016 EU STRATEGY ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

In 2016 La Strada International's NGO Platform - United against trafficking in human beings and members of the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW) -Europe provided input for the written consultation on the post 2016 EU Strategy on trafficking in human beings, which is expected to be presented in the end of 2017. In this statement, the need for continuation of the Commission's earlier strategic priorities was stressed, while also other priorities were highlighted to be addressed in the Post-2016 EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings. These included the need for: 1. Identification, protection and assistance to trafficked persons, in particular unconditional access to assistance and access to reflection periods and residence permits for trafficked persons. 2. Access to justice, in particular the provision of free legal assistance and access to compensation. 3. Prevention and addressing demand for all forms of human trafficking and accountability of the private sector. See further [full statement](#) with all recommendations.

NETWORKING, COOPERATION AND REPRESENTATION

La Strada International acknowledges that activities and interventions cannot be performed in isolation; partnerships and networks are essential to exchanging information to ensure that the activities of involved organisations complement each other in order to reach effective and salient results. For this purpose, LSI maintains contacts with a large network of actors in the anti-trafficking and related fields. Further, LSI follows policy developments on the European level and regularly issues comments and statements with relevant international actors. LSI is a member of, and closely cooperates with the following networks:

- **Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN)** - Together with HRDN LSI followed policy developments at the European level and issued statements.
- **Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)** -LSI attended PICUM's meetings and workshops, in particular the working group on decent work and undertook common action and advocacy in 2016.
- **Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW)** - LSI remained in regular contact with the International Secretariat of GAATW and its European members, contacts mainly related to common lobbying and advocacy, in particular on UN-related issues.
- **Alliance Expert Coordination Team (AECT)** (of the Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Being of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe -OSCE): LSI attended meetings of the AECT and one conference in 2016 and closely cooperated with the Special Representative and her office.

EVENTS IN WHICH LSI PARTICIPATED & CONTRIBUTED TO IN 2015

- *15 January 2016* - TRACE Consortium meeting, London, UK
- *29 February 2016* - TRACE workshop 'Policy Implications of Future Trends in Human Trafficking', Stockholm, Sweden
- *14 - 24 March 2016* - 60th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, New York, USA
- *29 March - 1 April 2016* - Interim coordination meeting & regional advocacy workshop in framework of Regional Programme against human trafficking in Eastern Europe (Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine) 2014-2016 Kiev, Ukraine
- *11 - 12 April* - 16th High-level Alliance against Trafficking in Persons Conference, Vienna, Austria
- *13 April* - Alliance Expert Coordination Team meeting (AECT), Vienna, Austria
- *20 - 21 April* - European Workshop on Proactive Identification and Support for trafficked persons in framework the Pro-Act project, London, UK
- *28 April* - TRACE Final conference, Brussels, Belgium
- *1 -2 June* - Balkans ACT Now II, final conference, Belgrade, Serbia
- *9 -10 June* - EU Civil Society Platform, Brussels, Belgium
- *10 - 11 June* - PICUM annual meeting, Brussels, Belgium
- *4 - 5 July*, Vienna Austria, Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on the Evaluation of Anti-Trafficking Responses by UNODC
- *7 - 8 September* - Prevention of trafficking in human beings for labour exploitation in supply chains, by OSCE OSR Berlin, Germany
- *30 September* - 30th anniversary celebration of CoMensha/La Strada Netherlands
- *4-5 October* - Seminar in the framework of the Project PRACE, Prague, Czech Republic
- *8-9 October* - FAWCO symposium: STAND UP Against Human Trafficking, The Hague, The Netherlands
- *20-21 October* - PICUM working group meeting on fair work, Brussels, Belgium
- *21 October* - Workshop on evaluation of prevention campaigns addressing demand, Berlin, Germany
- *26-28 October* - PSC Meeting Norway Programme, Kyiv, Ukraine
- *3-4 November* - DemandAT consortium meeting Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- *23-25 November* - OSCE OSR expert consultation meeting on NRM, Geneva, Switzerland
- *15-16 December* - OSCE Alliance Expert Coordination Team meeting, Vienna, Austria

SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE TO TRAFFICKED PERSONS AND RISK GROUPS

Assistance and support to trafficked persons is part of the core work of the LSI member organisations. The type of support provided depends on the individual situation, the specific needs of the person concerned and on the available services and resources. The needs, views and concerns of the client form the basis of the assistance provided and underlie all other work. Support services vary from crisis (emergency) intervention (e.g. referral to shelters, legal, medical and psycho-social care) to the implementation of long-term assistance programmes, such as vocational training and employment support. Social assistance strongly links to La Strada's awareness raising activities.

Within the La Strada programme, local, national and international networks have been created to assist trafficked persons, to ensure their safe return and to support them in regaining control over their lives. Assistance includes social, psychological and emotional assistance, health care, support during court proceedings, legal aid, housing and individual advocacy.

Programmes aim for the empowerment and social inclusion of trafficked persons either in the country of destination or in their home country. Important elements of social inclusion are access to housing, social protection, health care, education and employment. In 2016, several LSI members reported challenges with sufficient and suitable shelters for trafficked persons.

HELPLINES

All LSI members run national helplines (also called hotlines), some of which are free of charge and open 24 hours a day. Helplines are not only a strong tool to prevent human trafficking, for some of the LSI members they are also the components of the state system of identification and referral of trafficked persons. The helplines are utilised by individuals who have been trafficked and are in need of advice or assistance and family members, friends, as well as people seeking options to migrate abroad. If they wish, callers can remain anonymous to keep the threshold as low as possible.

The helpline Consultants provide information on destination countries and useful telephone numbers, assist in restoring personal documents, make contacts with the family and conduct crisis intervention. If a person who is currently in a situation of trafficking calls, the consultant can give her/him emotional support, discuss the options, support her/him in making a plan of action or help her/him in deciding whether to try to escape, with all risks attached, or try to survive in another way. People contact La Strada directly, for example through the hotlines, or are referred to La Strada by other agencies, such as other (local or foreign) NGOs, social workers, street workers or international organisations. Trafficked persons may also be identified by law enforcement agencies, such as police, border guards and prosecutors. In order to ensure the adequate identification and referral of victims, all La Strada members seek to establish cooperative links with these agencies. They also organise training courses for the police in order to enhance adequate identification and referral. Most LSI members report an increase regarding inquiries about study and employment opportunities abroad and related bureaucratic issues (e.g. necessary papers, verification of job opportunities), safety **concerns** and requests for contact addresses and phone numbers. Additionally, questions are received about (international) marriages, domestic violence, and children's rights protection, along with requests for investigation on mistreatment and abuse by employers and questions related to sex work.

HOTLINES OF LA STRADA IN UKRAINE AND THE NETHERLANDS AVAILABLE 24 HOURS A DAY

Since 1 February 2016, the Ukrainian National Toll-Free Hotline on Prevention of Domestic Violence, Trafficking and Gender Discrimination has started to work 24/7. The hotline is run by La Strada Ukraine. Since the start, more than 5000 callers received legal, social and psychological support. CoMensha/La Strada Netherlands started on June 1, 2016 a pilot project '24/7 Helpline Human trafficking', to check the need and feasibility to run the hotline 24 hours a day. In 2017 however the pilot in the Netherlands was finalised and it was decided not to continue with the 24 hours availability as the pilot showed that extension of opening hours was no longer needed.

PREVENTION & AWARENESS RAISING

One of the core aims of LSI is the prevention of human trafficking and the empowerment of at-risk groups and trafficked persons. The prevention and awareness raising activities target professionals who work with trafficked persons or who might be in contact with them, namely social workers, health workers, psychologists, cultural mediators, interpreters, lawyers and members of law enforcement. This is done through several prevention and education activities, including but not limited to: Lectures, seminars and workshops on the subject of human trafficking, either for the target group or for professionals and development and dissemination of prevention materials, as well as information provision through hotlines, websites and emails.



DO NOT GIVE YOUR TIME FOR FREE - CZECH CAMPAIGN TO REACH MIGRANT WOMEN AT RISK

Since 2014, La Strada Czech Republic, LEFÖ (Austria) and Ban Ying (German) have been implementing the project 'Empowerment of Migrant Women at Risk of Exploitation, Trafficking or Enslavement'. The project built on the extensive complementary experience of partner organisations in various forms of outreach work, awareness-raising campaigns and advocacy activities and focused on three complementary parts of how to support the target group. Because migrant women are isolated from common awareness raising measures, such as media, social networks etc, the project aimed to find alternative ways of informing them about their rights and ways of resolving abusive situations, as well as to offer them assistance through specialised services. Firstly, possibilities of alternative outreach work were tested. For example, in Austria, LEFÖ published a brochure informing migrant women of their rights and where to seek assistance. Secondly, the tailored services for migrant women were defined and implemented and thirdly, after the evaluation of the legislation, a strategy for further advocacy for the rights of migrant women was prepared.

Research conducted into the environments of the target group brought more detailed information about their specific needs, based on which existing specialised services can be further modified. Findings were discussed and shared at an international meeting held on 4 - 5 October this year in Prague, Czech Republic. As part of the project, La Strada Czech Republic launched a national campaign entitled 'Do not give your time for free'. The campaign message, translated into six languages, aimed to reach migrant women working in hidden or enclosed environments such as households, cleaning services within gated hotels, diplomatic complexes, etc. The campaign was promoted on Facebook and on different websites through Google AdWords and has been seen by over one million people.

DONORS AND SUPPORT

La Strada International is funded mostly by grants from national and international donor agencies. In 2016, the work of LSI has been financially support by the European Commission (IPA grant Balkan ACT Now II project via ASTRA and two FP7 grants for the TRACE and DemandAT research projects via TRI and ICMPD); the Dutch foundation ICCO/Church in Action (La Strada Programme 2016/Belarus & Ukraine and cofunding TRACE project), the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Regional Programme against Human Trafficking in Eastern Europe/Belarus) and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Rights at work - project) and private donations.

Obtained funding is spent on the following categories; personnel, organisational costs, core activities (e.g. lobby and advocacy, information collection and dissemination and strategy coordination and capacity building) and international projects. The total received income for LSI for activities was 125.468 Euro. LSI made a small surplus of 315 Euro. La Strada International remains quite dependent on project funds. The management of LSI therefore has analysed, further developed and revised its fundraising strategies aiming to build the fundraising capacity. The financial strategy of LSI focuses on diversification of revenue, more investment in developing and fostering donor relationships and exploring alternative possibilities to obtain funding for its work.

FUTURE STRATEGIES

As expressed and supported by members of LSI board and Assembly, the international secretariat of LSI, should become the secretariat of a broader network. Extension of the network seems needed to operate effectively at the European level and to give a stronger NGO voice. This network is to offer membership to a diverse group of organisations, as long as they focus (partly or fully) on addressing the issue of human trafficking. The network should promoting the respect for human rights through monitoring and evidence based policy and advocacy on behalf of European anti-trafficking NGOs.

Realising rights, both to prevent trafficking in human beings and to ensure effective remedies for those who have endured exploitation and abuse, is not just about good laws, but also about the implementation of those laws. La Strada International advocates for legislation that fully recognises and respects the rights of people and we monitor the implementation to ensure those rights are realised. We advocate for the changes based on evidence of the experiences of trafficked persons.

Under the umbrella of advocacy, NGOs could further share expertise and experience and build their capacity. The new 'European Network' should strengthen the European region and ensuring that EU and non EU countries are strongly represented.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The LSI member organisations are represented by one individual in the General Assembly, which functions as the governing body of the organisation. The General Assembly elects the members of the LSI Board from among the assembly members. General Assembly representatives 2016:

- Belarus - Elena Nesteruk
- Bulgaria - Nadia Kozhouharova
- Czech Republic - Marketa Hronkova
- Moldova - Ana Revenco
- Macedonia - Jasmina Rajkowska
- The Netherlands - Suzanne de Jong/Eefje de Volder
- Poland - Irena Dawid-Olczyk & Joanna Garnier
- Ukraine - Lyudmyla Kovalchuk

LSI BOARD

The board of La Strada International is responsible for monitoring the work of the International Secretariat and for setting up discussions around broader strategic and thematic issues. The board of LSI comprises 3 members; Kateryna Levchenko, Irena Konecna and Maria Todorovska. In 2016, the mandate of two of the 3 board members has expired, but it was decided to prolong the term of these two board members until the next Assembly meeting, which is foreseen for the fall of 2017. In 2016 several board skype meetings took place as well as direct meetings with board members.

LSI Board members in 2016:

- Chair - Irina Alkhovka (Belarus) - in December replaced by Kateryna Levchenko
- Treasurer - Irena Konečná (Czech Republic)
- Secretary - Ekaterina Levchenko (Ukraine) - In December replaced by Marija Todorovska



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La Strada International is a European NGO network against human trafficking that works from a human rights perspective in support of trafficked persons to ensure a world without trafficking in human beings where human rights are respected. La Strada's primary goal is empowering trafficked persons, improving their position through promoting their universal rights, including the right to choose to emigrate and work abroad and to be protected from violence and abuse.