

Annual Report 2024



From the director

Highlights of the year by Dr Natalia Ollus

Our work continues to be guided by the ethos of HEUNI's founder, professor Inkeri Anttila, who emphasized respect for human values and rational decision-making in crime prevention and criminal justice. Her poignant belief was that criminologists should not sit in their chambers, thinking wise thoughts, but should instead actively engage in societal discussion for the improvement of policies and practices.

In 2024 HEUNI did just that: we launched 13 new publications, attended and organized 115 events, and reached over 7300 persons. This is an all-time record for us, and an incredible achievement considering the small size of the institute! We also secured 4 new projects and forged new partnerships across Europe. I wish to extend my sincerest thanks to everyone at HEUNI for their hard work and dedication, and also to our partners and counterparts for their support and cooperation.

I'm also very proud to state that our work and our outputs made a significant difference across our strategic areas of work:

- In the area of enhancing criminal justice processes, we commenced an important new project on the use of videorecorded interviews of parties and remote hearings in court. The project "E-ViVi -Enhancing Videorecorded Interviews and Virtual Hearings in Europe" aims to establish concrete best practice recommendations based on assessments of existing efforts. The project has already received a lot of interest from court practitioners and will produce practical guidance to ensure effective protection of procedural safeguards. Stay tuned!

□ In the area of countering gender-based and other forms of violence, our work to support victims of forced marriage resulted in several concrete tools. I am particularly proud of the visually appealing customer journey map illustrating the support process for victims of forced marriage, developed under the project “EASY – It is never easy to talk about this”. HEUNI also impacted on the development of legislation to criminalise forced marriage through as our expert was called to a hearing on this provision in the legislative committee of the Parliament of Finland.

□ Addressing and countering human trafficking and exploitation has for several years been one of our key areas of expertise and work. In 2024 we strengthened our work in the broader Nordic context. I personally visited Iceland, Norway and Sweden to showcase how Finland is ahead when it comes to addressing labour exploitation and trafficking for the purpose of forced labour. We will continue to share good practices and develop victim-sensitive approaches within our many ongoing Nordic projects. We are also preparing to undertake a scoping study on emerging forms of human trafficking in the Nordic region.

In the area of social sustainability in supply chains, we published a major study on the challenges exploited migrant workers face in accessing remedies in the Baltic Sea region. Our conclusion is that remedy mechanisms exist in theory, but they are difficult to access in practice, and are often inefficient in actually providing remedy and justice to aggrieved workers.

I also wish to highlight the very fruitful cooperation we had with the Australian Institute of Criminology. AIC has always been a great source of inspiration to us. We shared the realization that it would be useful to learn more from each other and also share our joint knowledge to a broader audience. This is why we came up with the idea of the Down Under - Up North – webinar series. During 2024 we organized four joint interesting and inspiring webinars, which attracted a broad audience from across the globe. My sincere thanks to AIC’s Rick Brown and his superb team of experts!

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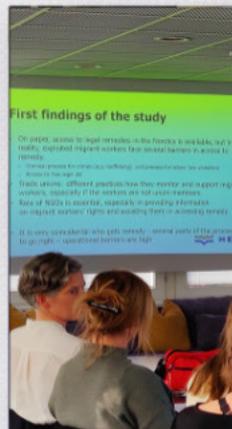
Finally, the year 2024 was a year of practical changes, as HEUNI moved to new premises. We are now located in the same building as several of the national Ombudsmen. This has brought many synergies: joint events, a joint housewarming party, greater exchange with other experts and sharing of information. Unfortunately, we also had to deal with some mishaps, including a roof leakage, but all’s well that ends well!

As we move into 2025, HEUNI is poised to make an even greater impact. With Finland chairing both the Nordic Council of Ministers and the OSCE in 2025, HEUNI has the opportunity to contribute to enhanced international dialogue and collaboration. We will actively participate in anti-trafficking efforts during Finland’s Presidency and the OSCE chairmanship. We will also continue to innovate, collaborate, and make this our most impactful year yet.

Natalia Ollus
HEUNI Director

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Operational Framework

THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE FOR CRIME PREVENTION AND CONTROL, AFFILIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS (HEUNI) FUNCTIONS

under the joint auspices of the Government of Finland and the United Nations as an independent research and policy-making institute. HEUNI was established in 1981 with an agreement between Finland and the United Nations.

HEUNI's work is guided by its founding statutes, which state that HEUNI:

- organises seminars for policy-makers, administrators, experts and researchers;
- collects, provides, publishes and disseminates information;
- conducts research;
- and holds conferences and meetings.

HEUNI's work focuses on conducting research, on publishing the findings in easily accessible formats, disseminating the findings to relevant stakeholders, and providing advice to policy-makers related to the institute's areas of focus.

HEUNI's menu of services include the development of research methodologies, the collection and analysis of various forms of data, the development of indicators, measures, practical tools and guidelines, and the provision of training.

HEUNI selects and develops its areas of focus independently but is guided by the priorities of the United Nations.

HEUNI's mandate of work covers all of Europe but HEUNI aims to transfer European practices and knowledge also beyond this geographic region.

HEUNI is the European regional institute in the United Nations Criminal Justice and Crime Prevention programme network (PNI). HEUNI's affiliation with the United Nations means that HEUNI collaborates with other members of this network, closely follows the work of the UN vis-à-vis the prevention of crime and crime control within the framework of criminal justice and supports the UN in the implementation of its priorities, in particular the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

HEUNI's budget

The main administrative and budgetary responsibility for HEUNI lies with the Government of Finland, but part of the institute's turnover is covered through participation in externally funded projects and grants from, among others, the European Commission, the Government of Finland, and the United Nations.

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|--|----------------|
| EXPENSES 2024 | 784 491 |
| Personnel costs | 660 283 |
| Operational costs | 77 434 |
| Premises and its maintenance | 46 774 |
| INCOME 2024 | 802 362 |
| Budgetary funding from the Ministry of Justice | 585 000 |
| External funding (projects, commercial activities) | 217 362 |
| Rollover from the previous years | 17 871 |



Nation



HEUNI'S ORGANISATION

HEUNI has a professional and motivated team of experts and efficient administrative processes that support the work of the institute.

In 2024, HEUNI employed 2 interns: Mia Risberg (University of Eastern Finland, MA programme in Administrative Sciences, specializing in Criminal Law and Judicial Procedure), Anni Lindroos (University of Helsinki, MA programme in Criminology).

Director

Dr Natalia Ollus

Senior Programme Officers

Anniina Jokinen

Dr Julia Korkman

Researchers

Anni Lietonen

Anna-Greta Pekkarinen

Sustainability Specialist

Saara Haapasaari

Communications Officer

Aleksandra Anikina

Administrative and Finance Specialist

Ieva Silinevica

Assistant

Aili Pääkkönen

ADVISORY BOARD

The international Advisory Board of HEUNI serves as an important link with the United Nations and the various regions of Europe. The Chairman of the Advisory Board and four of its members are appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations after consultation with the Government of Finland. Four members of the Board, including the Director of HEUNI, are appointed by the Government of Finland.

The members of the Advisory Board are appointed for a period of five years. For the 2023 – 2027 term the composition of the Board is as follows:

- [Dr Katja Franko, Chairman of the Board, Professor of Criminology, University of Oslo](#)
- [Dr Mark Shaw, Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime](#)
- [Neil Wilkins, Head of Migrant Workers Programme, Institute for Human Rights and Business](#)
- [Dr Andrea Di Nicola, Director of the Centre of Security and Crime Sciences and Associate Professor of criminology at the Faculty of Law of the University of Trento](#)
- [Stephanie Futter-Orel, Executive Manager, WAVE Network \(Women Against Violence Europe\)](#)
- [Director, Division for Treaty Affairs, UNODC, \(ex officio member\)](#)
- [Dr Elina Pirjatanniemi, Professor, Director, Institute for Human Rights, Åbo Akademi University](#)
- [Ari Evwaraye, Head Of Strategy, Ministry of the Interior](#)
- [Dr Aarne Kinnunen, Counsellor, Ministry of Justice](#)
- [Dr Natalia Ollus, Director, HEUNI](#)

A representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime participates ex officio in all deliberations of the Advisory Board.

In 2024 the Advisory Board convened in person in Helsinki in November 2024 for its formal annual meeting.

Focus areas

Strengthening the criminal justice responses to, including the identification of human trafficking and similar crimes (such as forced marriage, exploitation of children and young people, labour exploitation)



Highlights

HEUNI was asked to comment on the proposal on amending the Finnish trafficking legislation to refer to forced marriage explicitly as a purpose of exploitation. HEUNI supported the amendment. The legislation came into force in 1 January 2025.

Council of Europe cooperation

Anniina Jokinen was hired by the for the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities to develop a report on the role of local and regional authorities in combating trafficking in human beings, aimed at providing concrete guidance to local, regional and national authorities in Council of Europe member States. The report includes examples collected across Europe on solutions developed by local and regional authorities to address challenges in prevention of trafficking, detection, outreach and referral, assistance to victims as well as coordination of anti-trafficking actions. The draft report was presented at the Committee meeting on 4 July 2024 in Strasbourg. The report was approved by the Committee in October 2024 after which it will be presented and finalised at the Congress Plenary Session in 26 March 2025 and become public.

UNODC regional expert group meeting

Anniina Jokinen attended the Regional Expert Group Meeting on Countering Labour Exploitation in Trafficking in Persons, including trafficking caused by migration from armed conflicts, in South Eastern Europe organised by UNODC in Chisinau, Moldova on 5-6 March 2024. The meeting brought together experts and practitioners across Europe to share latest findings concerning the situation of Ukrainian refugees and the risk of trafficking. Anniina presented findings from HEUNI's ELECT THB-project and Patterns of Exploitation report.

INTEGRATE-project

HEUNI, University of Lund and Fafo institute received funding from the Nordic Council of Ministers for a research project which studies innovative solutions targeting challenges associated with work-related crime and work environment risks, with a special emphasis on combating labour exploitation. The project started in September 2024 and it aims to foster action and policy-driven outcomes, alongside engaging dialogues with key stakeholders in the Nordic-Baltic region to bolster the dissemination of research-based knowledge, facilitate the exchange of experiences, and encourage mutual learning within and beyond the confines of Nordic borders. Findings from this endeavor will contribute to Nordic discussions on formulating precise and knowledge-driven strategies for the prevention and detection of work-related crime. These strategies will prioritize safeguarding a healthy work environment and minimizing occupational risks. The main outputs will be published during the second half of 2025, and include a research report and several practical tools, including a factsheet and checklist as well as best-practice videos for labour and social inspectors, social partners and policy makers aimed to enhance their skills to prevent and address work-related crimes and work environment risks.



IN 2024, HEUNI SHAPED NATIONAL LEGISLATION BY SUPPORTING THE INCLUSION OF FORCED MARRIAGE IN FINLAND'S TRAFFICKING LAW AND AMPLIFIED ITS INTERNATIONAL IMPACT THROUGH STRATEGIC COOPERATION WITH THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND UNODC.

Focus areas

**Gender-based and
other forms of violence**



In 2024 HEUNI continued the implementation of the CERV-funded EASY project, which will continue until February 2025.

Through the course of the year HEUNI developed and published two reports “Never easy” – Enhancing response and support to victims of forced marriage” Best Practice booklet, as well as “Long Journey” – toolkit for Supporting Victims of Forced Marriage, which is also available in Finnish, German and Spanish. We also conducted a study visit to Catalonia with Finnish practitioners and EASY partners to learn more about the Catalan protocol against forced marriages and the regional work against forced marriages in Girona, Spain.

We also organised one webinar and two national workshops to disseminate the tools developed. In addition, Anniina Jokinen presented EASY-project tools and findings in two webinars organised by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare targeting social and health care professionals as well as at a meeting of permanent NGO working group of the Finnish Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (NAPE). She also attended the Irish national workshop of the EASY project and shared best practices identified in Finland to the Irish colleagues.

Catalan study visit

The EASY-project team organised a study trip in Catalonia, Spain on 15–18 April 2024. The study visit brought together EASY partners and experts from Finland, Germany, Ireland and Spain in Barcelona and Girona to learn more about the Catalan protocol against forced marriages and other best practices from Catalan and Spanish experts and practitioners. The work against forced marriages in Catalonia and in particular in Girona demonstrates the importance of local action and close cooperation, involving all parts of the administration and strengthening awareness of the problem among various actors e.g. in social and health care services, schools, youth services as well as local and regional criminal justice actors and NGOs.



On October 18th, we organised an online side event during the Twelfth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (<https://t.co/CXZnBb59af>) to enhance support to victims of forced marriage by sharing outcomes and tools developed as part of the EASY-project. Anniina Jokinen, Senior Programme Officer from HEUNI set the scene by outlining the links between forced marriage and human trafficking and sharing EASY tools. Dr. Marc Salat Paisal, an Associate Professor from the University of Lleida, presented legal approaches to forced marriages emphasizing issues such as the hidden nature of forced marriages, lack of systematic data collection and country-specific definitions. Yasmin Martina Turgut, a counselor from SOLWODI Counseling Center in Mainz, presented a case study highlighting the needs and obstacles faced by victims. In the conclusions, the importance of ensuring that victims of forced marriage have access to support was highlighted.

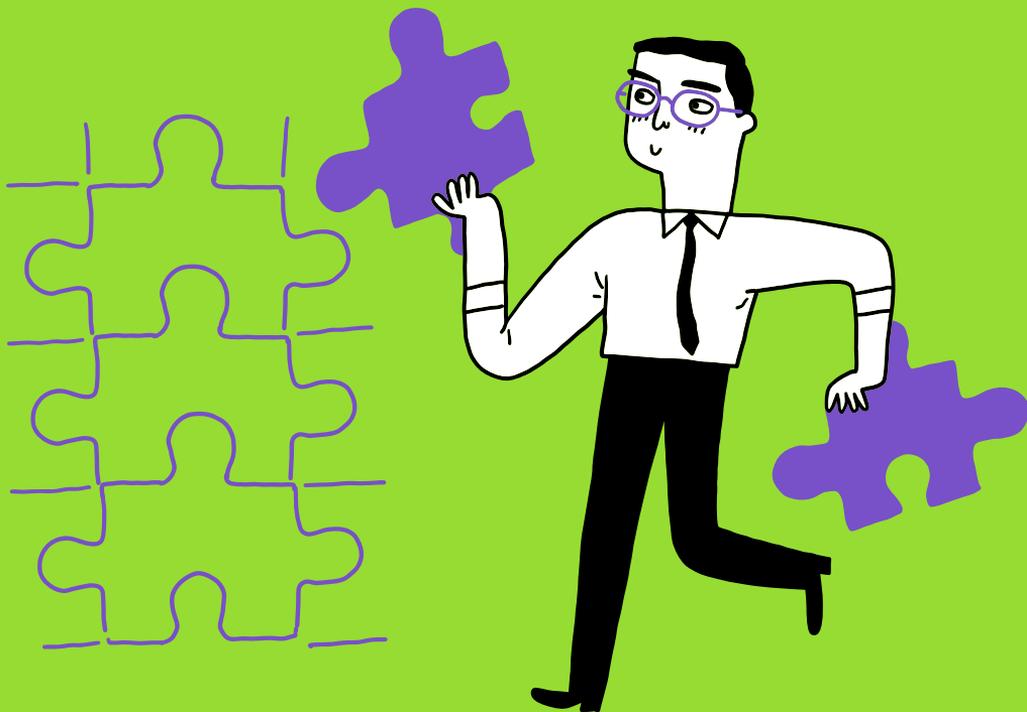
National workshops

We also organised two national workshops in Finland to share EASY tools and to discuss best practices in enhancing support to victims of forced marriage. The first workshop was organised on November 19th with participants from the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), services of cities and wellbeing service regions, Ministry of Justice, The Assistance system for victims of human trafficking, the Finnish Immigration Service and NGOs. Anniina Jokinen presented the EASY project's key findings as well as the project tools for identification and support of forced marriage victims. THL's Mimmi Koukkula and Fadumo Mohamed shared a draft of THL's "Know and Act – card" on forced marriages that aims to summarize the phenomenon of forced marriages to social welfare professionals. Johanna Aapakallio from Loisto Settlement introduced SOPU – work and school workshop organized under the EASY – project. SOPU-work supports youth and families facing honor-related violence through counseling, guidance, peer groups, and mentoring.



Focus areas

Enhancing the skills of businesses and public procurement agencies to identify and prevent exploitation in supply chains.



During the year, HEUNI strengthened its presence in the business and human rights field and highlighted the importance of addressing labour exploitation and forced labour risks in supply chains in Finland and across Europe. Key milestones included the publication of a report on exploited migrant workers' access to remedy in the Baltic Sea region, as well as the development of a state-of-the-art, concrete guideline for conducting due diligence in construction projects related to labour exploitation risks.

During the year, HEUNI collaborated closely with Finnish business and human rights organizations. HEUNI delivered expert presentations on forced labour risks at events organized by FIBS (Finnish Business and Society) and UN Global Compact Finland. Natalia Ollus wrote a blog post for the UN Global Compact Finland website on labour exploitation and forced labour risks in local supply chains (read in Finnish [here](#)). HEUNI was also involved in Fair Trade Finland's pilot project to develop Fair Trade criteria for wild berry picking in Finland (read more).

In November, HEUNI's Saara Haapasaari gave a presentation at the 13th UN Forum on Business and Human Rights in Geneva. The presentation focused on findings and promising practices in stakeholder engagement regarding exploited migrant workers' access to remedy in the Nordics and Baltic Sea region.



Exploited migrant workers' access to remedy was a key focus of HEUNI's activities in 2024. As part of the "Safety for All? Remedy for Exploited Migrant Workers in the Nordic Region" project, HEUNI co-organized a roundtable in Stockholm in March with project partners ETI Sweden and the King Institute. The roundtable brought together participants from Swedish companies, trade unions, authorities, and research institutions. HEUNI also co-organized a roundtable in Helsinki for Finnish businesses in collaboration with UN Global Compact Finland in June. At both events, initial findings from the study were presented, and external speakers shared examples of their work. The presentations were followed by engaging discussions among participants about the challenges and barriers to migrant workers' access to remedy, as well as promising practices to improve access to remedy.

In October, HEUNI took part in the Swedish National Conference Against Human Trafficking in Gothenburg, where Saara Haapasaari participated in a panel discussion on the role and various strategies of trade unions in enhancing migrant workers' access to remedy. In November, HEUNI organized the final roundtable of the project, bringing together Finnish authorities, trade unions, and businesses to discuss how to improve migrant workers' access to remedy.





The project was led by HEUNI and conducted together with Coretta and Martin Luther King Institute for Peace in Norway, and Ethical Trading Initiative Sweden. The project was funded by Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) Project Support Facility (PSF) and the Swedish Gender Equality Agency, and the project partners.

New report: From rights on paper to rights in action

HEUNI's Safety for all? Remedy for exploited migrant workers in the Nordic region -project came to an end in 2024, with a launch of the report and a webinar to share the project's findings.

Key takeaways:

- There are several grievance mechanisms existing on paper in the focus countries, i.e. Finland, Norway and Sweden, but in practice, there are multiple barriers in migrant workers' access to remedy, e.g. complex and costly processes, police report often dropped, lack of investigation, high evidence threshold, few prosecutions.
- NGOs and trade unions play a key role in helping rightsholders to access the different mechanisms and overcome the barriers. However, trade unions have different practices and strategies on how much they assist non-member migrant workers.
- Currently, corporate sustainability reporting does not provide much information about grievance mechanisms, remediation processes or outcomes. More transparency is needed from companies.



HEUNI advocated for the need to address human rights risks in local supply chains. During the year, EU legislation on corporate responsibility and mandatory human rights due diligence was approved, including the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive and the Ban on Products Made with Forced Labour, both established by EU institutions. HEUNI issued statements on the importance of these laws and their transposition. In relation to local supply chains, HEUNI co-wrote an opinion piece for Helsingin Sanomat with the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, addressing the (lack of) actions taken by the state and businesses in the wild berry sector ([link in Finnish](#)). In October, Anni Lietonen gave a presentation at Hanken School of Economics to corporate responsibility students about labour exploitation and human trafficking risks in Finland and local supply chains, which was HEUNI's first time to collaborate with a business school.

Regarding work with public procurement organizations, model criteria to combat labor exploitation were published in Motiva's criteria bank ([link](#)) in January. The criteria bank is open to everyone, and public procurement agencies are encouraged to use the criteria. HEUNI also organized a series of training sessions and workshops for professionals at the City of Helsinki, specifically targeting those working with construction and cleaning procurement. Additionally, HEUNI developed a project in collaboration with Motiva for 2025, where public procurement agencies will come together to co-create good practices for combating labor exploitation in cleaning procurement. The project is set to begin in early 2025. HEUNI's activities related to the construction sector continued. Anni Lietonen participated in a Nordic construction sector trade union conference in January in Copenhagen, where she presented HEUNI's work in the sector, as well as the differences in the Nordic countries' actions in combating labor exploitation. HEUNI also presented at two events organized by the Finnish Construction Sector Trade Union and trained shop stewards and worker representatives on identifying labor exploitation at construction sites. of construction information in Finland.

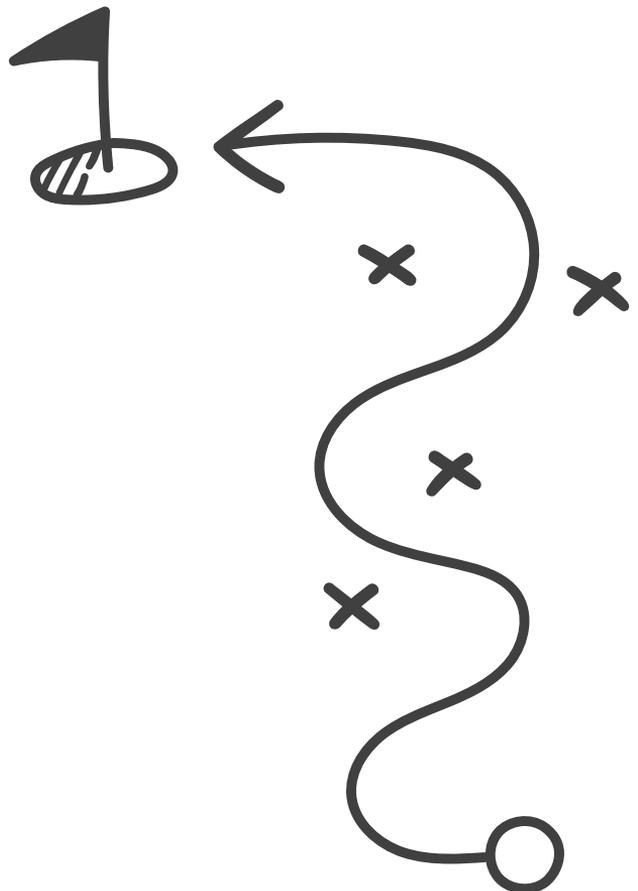
A milestone achievement during the year was the publication of a product information card on addressing labor exploitation risks at Finnish construction sites. The card was authored by HEUNI's Anni Lietonen in collaboration with Ville Wartiovaara of the Finnish Construction Sector Confederation. The guideline was developed by a multi-stakeholder group consisting of The Finnish Construction Trade Union, representatives from construction companies, and public buyers. The standard went through an open public consultation and was finalized with support from the Finnish Labour Inspectorate and Victim Support Finland (RIKU). The project was made possible and published by the Rakennustieto Oy, a leading provider of construction information in Finland. Rakennustieto maintains a "RT Building Information File" which contains standards, regulations and products files for participants in building projects on a variety of topics from design, repair and maintenance to contract building.

Comprehensive industry-specific guideline to prevent labour exploitation

A longstanding goal to publish industry-specific guidelines for the construction sector to prevent labour exploitations has been achieved as HEUNI in close collaboration with key stakeholders developed a practical tool to be used as a common standard to prevent exploitation in the construction sector. It outlines key facts about features of labour exploitation and other related phenomena as well as the laws regarding the obligations of main contractors, buyers, and companies. The instructions detail how to detect labour exploitation and provides preventative measures for buyers and practical guidance for occupational safety and health inspectors. It also details corrective measures when labour exploitation has already been detected at the construction site. With the help of the standard, companies can promote healthy competition and fair working conditions as well as help prevent grey market and economic crime.

Responsible recruitment of migrant workers was another central topic at HEUNI, receiving considerable attention in Finnish media throughout the year. There were several public cases and police investigations related to excessive recruitment fees paid by migrant workers, or "threshold money," as the Finnish police call it. Natalia Ollus was interviewed by the Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE) about a case involving dozens of migrant nurses who had been charged illegal recruitment fees.

The first webinar of the AIC-HEUNI series, held in April, focused on responsible recruitment, and in November, HEUNI participated in Work in Finland's event on responsible recruitment in the social and healthcare sector.





HEUNI

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