

4.3: Lobbying and raising awareness of the rights of migrant women, including those in commercial sex work, to a faire life and living

In 1999, the Austrian NGO called MAIZ (Autonomes Integrationszentrum von & für Migrantinnen) launched a campaign to improve understanding of the situation of migrant women in sex work, and to lobby for the right of these women to a fair living, so that they can build a decent life.

Materials produced

In addition to a series of awareness-raising events such as workshops and an Open Day, and a website, MAIZ produced:

- A poster-sized fold-out leaflet with details of the campaign in German, introduction to the issue and the resources available to understand more about it and related issues such as sex tourism.
- A practical information brochure and newsletter for migrant women sex workers.
- A publication on the laws in Austria, destined mostly for women from Latin America and the Caribbean and produced in Spanish.
- A folder in Spanish.

How the materials were put together

- MAIZ works with the **target group** – migrant women sex workers and victims of trafficking – on an ongoing basis, so is aware of the nature of the information they need, and the importance of providing updated practical information on their rights and the resources available to them. For the design, MAIZ worked with public relations and graphic design specialists.
- A secondary target group, for the awareness-raising campaign, was individuals who have a responsibility for decision-making and service provision for migrant women: politicians, authorities and educational staff. The public was also a more general audience.
- There is no specific slogan for the campaign, but the **message** is based on the fundamental rights of migrant women. The call for a 'fair life and fair living for migrant women in Europe' is repeated throughout the materials.
- The **format** is quite adult, featuring the face and body of a woman and a clear 'prohibited' sign of cross in circle. The poster does not, however, actually tell people what they should do if they want to contribute to the campaign, although it doubles up as a folder, and on the reverse side has details of activities and resources that are part of the campaign. It is a good idea to use the poster also as a folder, since it can be pinned on notice boards and also distributed. The leaflets are small in size so that they can easily be carried in the pocket.

- ***Distribution:*** the materials were distributed by mail and through individual contacts. They were also sent to brothels, women's organizations, educational establishments, and distributed at meetings, presentations etc in Austria and elsewhere in Europe.

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A few comments:

- An English phrase also appears on the poster: 'Against the reduction to sex', but it is not clear what this is supposed to mean. It does not make good sense in English and should have been checked by a native English speaker. In general, if you are going to use languages that are not your own in your materials, then you should always check them with a native speaker of that language. And you should consider why you want to use them – in this case, it is not clear what adding the English phrase was supposed to achieve. It is true that advertisers in Europe often try to attract a young audience by using English, but these tend to be widely used 'buzz words' or 'catch phrases' that most people would understand because they see/hear them regularly. [We have cut off the English phrase from the graphic provided of the poster so that it can be used.]

Graphics references

4.3 Fair life and living poster.jpg