

#### 4.4 A campaign to encourage people to see that trafficking of women into the sex trade is not just business, it's everyone's business

In 1999 The Research Centre of Women's Affairs in Greece initiated a campaign to raise awareness about the trafficking of women into the sex trade. The campaign ran in three countries (Greece, UK and Germany). Their aim was to encourage the general public to see that trafficking in women – a denial of their fundamental human rights and a form of violence against them – may be a result of demand but is also supported by silent complicity/acceptance.

##### Materials produced

- In addition to a newsletter and their regular 'Telessila' magazine, which were mobilized to support the campaign but are produced only in Greek, the Research Centre of Women's Affairs produced dedicated campaign posters and leaflets in Greek, English and German, all using the same striking graphic and slogan. The visual identity is simple: a black background with red and white features; a woman's figure, alone in the centre of the sign for 'female'. The intention is to give the feeling of isolation and gender-based oppression.
- On the reverse of the leaflet, there is the design of a telephone and the words '*you can ring...*'. This is followed by the names of contact organizations and their addresses and telephone numbers. Each leaflet lists organizations in the country in which the leaflet was produced.

##### How the materials were put together

- There were several different **target groups**. The primary group comprised organizations and agencies that might influence policy towards trafficking and migrants directly, such as municipalities, public services and universities. The secondary target group was the general public, with a special message in the leaflet to women. The beneficiaries (and also a group addressed in the leaflet) were women migrants, trafficking survivors and women in danger of falling victim to exploiters.
- The **message** of the campaign is upfront and clear: 'silence is complicity'. This is aimed directly at public complacency. It is reinforced by the secondary message, that the 'sex industry flourishes on the buying power of the customers' – that is, the sex industry is not someone else's business but thrives because of customers, who are members of the general public. The Research Centre of Women's Affairs found through their research that, while the vast majority of people in all three countries condemned trafficking and thought that it should be abolished or controlled, and one out of three respondents had had some experience with trafficking first- or second-hand, they did not feel that the issue affected their lives in any meaningful way. Hence, the message that passivity is a denial of responsibility: a very powerful message.
- The **format** was the same for the different language versions. The poster and the leaflet use the same main visual. In this way the message is consistent. It was felt that the poster

would create initial interest and that people would then be encouraged to read the leaflet more carefully. The stark black and white design contrasts interestingly with the hot red lettering of the message. In the same way the elegance of the design contrasts to the blunt openness of the message. These effects were deliberate. The group intended to create uneasiness in the target group, feeling that this was the best way to grab their attention.

- **Quantities produced:** 1,000 (Greek), 1,000 (English), 1,000 (German) posters were produced; and 10,000 (Greek), 10,000 (English) and 10,000 (German) leaflets. These were sent to women's groups and organizations, migrants' groups and organizations, municipalities, public authorities and service bureaux, universities and hospitals in all three countries. In Greece, shipment focused on Athens and major Greek cities; in Germany it focused on Berlin and Dusseldorf and their outskirts; and in the UK it focused on London, Bath and Frome. The materials were also sent to the networks the group is a member of, its partners in other projects and the municipality of Vlore, Albania. The materials were distributed during such activities as open days and press conferences.

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- **A few comments:** One of the major findings of the Centre's research on the attitudes and opinions of the public with respect to trafficking was that generally people did not feel involved in the issue. This finding informs the poster and the entire leaflet. On the front page of the leaflet (which reproduces the poster) the visual reinforces the clear and unambiguous message. The two inside pages of the leaflet, however, seem less effective. They are rather 'busy', packed with statements, some in normal type, others bold. There is no clear indication why the bold items are intended to stand out. While all the comments refer to trafficking, they do not seem to be aimed coherently at a particular audience. Different parts speak to different people. The Research Centre of Women's Affairs intentionally set out to create a feeling of uneasiness through its aggressive message. Groups wanting to send a less aggressive message or to target the victims themselves could use the same visual design, but would want to adapt the message and inside pages to their audience.
- In the English language leaflet there are some typographical errors. They are not serious, but it is probably worth suggesting here that, if you are going to produce materials in languages that are not your own, you should try and find a native speaker to proof-read texts for you.

#### Graphics references

[4.4 Silence is complicity poster GRE.jpg](#)

[4.4 Silence is complicity poster EN.jpg](#)

[4.4 Silence is complicity poster GER.jpg](#)