

Daphne Programme – Year 2000

Final Report

Project No. : 2000/DAP/021/W

Title : VIOLENCE AGAINST LESBIANS: EDUCATION – RESEARCH - PUBLIC RELATION

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End Date : 31.12.2001

Co-ordinating Organisation name : LESBIAN INFORMATION AND COUNSELING SERVICE e.V., FRANKFURT/MAIN, Germany

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Partner Organisations' names and countries :

- (1) Lesbenberatung e.V. Berlin, Germany
- (2) Frauenreferat der Stadt Frankfurt/Main, Germany
- (3) Wiener Antidiskriminierungsstelle für gleichgeschlechtliche Lebensweisen, Austria

(4) Garance asbl, Brussels, Belgium

(5) SOLA, London, Great Britain

1. Aims of the project

(In this part, please answer the following questions : What **problem** did the project aim to address ? Who are the **beneficiaries** ? What was the **expected result** ? If the Commission formulated **conditions / recommendations** in its selection letter, how were these fulfilled ?)

Based on research from Great Britain, Germany and Austria it can be assumed that in Western European Societies more than 90% of lesbians experience hate speech, more than 40% sexual assaults and more than 20% physical attacks because of their psycho-sexual identity, meaning being lesbians. In 1999/2000 a comprehensive concept had been developed outlining various fields of action and listing demands from NGOs and governmental institutions on local, national and European level. The concepts addresses victims, perpetrators and the social structure.

The focus of the 3 year programme is to implement certain aspects of the developed concept: In the first year we focussed on:

- (1) quantity and quality of health care provision (support systems) for lesbians with experience of violence and/or discrimination
- (2) public campaign: "prejudices hurt. Prejudices are the basis for violence".
- (3) Building up a interdisciplinary network
- (4) Evaluation

The **beneficiaries** are a) lesbians with experience of violence b) social institutions, c) public, d) police and state attorneys

The **expected results** are

- Gaining data about the quantity and quality of social (and governmental) institutions providing social, economical, juridical support for lesbians with experience of violence
- Model of good practises and development standards
- List of recommended institutions
- Raising awareness social institutions and the general public about violence against lesbians e.g. family care centres, women centres, help lines etc.)
- Continuation of the European interdisciplinary network of NGOs and experts
- Implementing a German network of lesbian helplines and counselling services: development of general standard for quantifying violence against lesbians.
- Lobbying: building an advisory group of the project

2. Implementation of the project

(In this part, please answer the following points : Amongst the **planned activities**, outline those that were **implemented**. Likewise, outline those that were **not implemented** and explain the underlying reasons thereof. Were any **unforeseen activities** implemented ? Did you revise the **time-table** at any point and why ? Describe the role, the activities and the contributions of **every partner**.)

(1) **Major changes:**

- a) The original time table was based on a November – November schedule which had to be changed due to change of the beginning of the programme.
- b) A major change regarding the evaluation of the job of the project manager had to be made: The "Bundesverwaltungsamt" – an executive organ of the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs - visited the project and re-evaluated the position of the project manager. They came to the conclusion that the job was under-estimated and had to be adapted to BAT II a payment. This change was made.

(2) The **questionnaire** had been developed in January – March 2001. Addresses had been collected in May 2001. The questionnaire was sent to social services (family care centres, victim supports, women centres, women hot lines, health care centres, counselling services) and police departments. In order to increase the rate of return the postage was paid by licensee (COD). The final date of return was 15th of July. The evaluation/analysis was taking place August till October 2001. The results were presented on a press

conference 31st of October 2001. In November and December the **brochure** “WELL TAKEN CARE OF?” was written, printed and publishes in German.

One aim of the collected data was, to publish a list of institutions which provide care for lesbians with experience of violence. A major result of the research is, that there is no structural implementation of a victim-centred approach. Victims are regarded as a more or less homogenous group and thus it is assumed that no specific approach is needed. Only a few of the answering institutions do provide lesbian specific offers in counselling and other services. But this approach is base on the efforts of individuals. If they will leave the organisation, there is no guarantee that the institution will keep up its inclusive approach. Therefore it seems to be a proper reaction to develop a “**model of good practise**” and publish those institutions, which can fulfil the developed standards – on a structural level.

The **co-operation partners**: gathering addresses of all social institutions of each country (Belgium, Austria, Germany). Belgium: translation of questionnaire into Dutch and French. Sending questionnaire out. Collecting returned questionnaires, providing data for further evaluation (Austria and Belgium). Belgium had to translate the answers into German again. The evaluation is done in Germany together with our co-operation partner in Berlin.

The women’s department of the city of Frankfurt was organising the press conference.

(2) The **public campaign** was developed in co-operation with a communication agency, net2b, in order to meet the profile of possible perpetrators. The profile can be described shortly as male/female, in their 30s, economically settled, at first sight open minded, “tolerant”. Our goal was NOT to change the ideas of nationalists or people who hate lesbians. Our goal was to address those who share common prejudices. Prejudices are the breeding ground for violence. Five Posters have been developed aiming at common prejudices toward lesbians:

I don’t mind lesbians, BUT why do they have to look like men?

I don’t mind lesbians, BUT thy just didn’t got the right man!

I don’t mind lesbians, BUT they are not normal.

I don’t mind lesbians, BUT children need a father.

I don’t mind lesbians, BUT not my daughter!

Every posters ends with: Prejudices hurt. Prejudice are the breeding ground for violence. No BUT – No violence against lesbians. (see attached examples)

Various media had been discussed but due to marketing research posters are still the best way to reach our target group.

The campaign had been developed April till September 2001 and was presented in Vienna, Berlin, Frankfurt/M as a PR-campaign. In Germany posters will be used, in Vienna we will use window stickers in the streetcars. In Brussels we held two workshops in December 2001 for sensitization of social institutions and presenting the posters. It was decided not to campaign those posters because due to lack of social support systems for lesbians who experienced violence. The institutions present at the workshops in Brussels will distribute the posters on their own ways. This is regarded as another way to raise awareness for violence against lesbians. The campaign also had been presented on the internet. A guest book was installed which made it possible for visitors to react to the posters. First reactions of the representation of the posters were very positive: lesbian institutions will do the campaign in their cities (e.g. Germany: Cologne, Düsseldorf, Neubrandenburg, Chemnitz, Göttingen, Kassel) the posters are send to Argentina (!), Italy, Serbia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Netherlands and Great Britain as models of good practice. Especially one poster went right to the point, “I don’t mind lesbians, but children need a father”. A lot of people signed at the guest book to CONFIRM this prejudice and to state their opinion that “**Lesbians having children is against nature**”, children raising up in a same-sex partnership will be treated badly and thus suffer being raised up in a same-sex partnership and so on. The reactions show, that in some European countries there indeed might be some more tolerance towards same-sex partnerships, but when it comes to the centre of what makes this society – ideas about family and procreation- all those old prejudices arise-even stronger and more determined.

Co-operation partners: On our meeting 6th till 9th of July in Vienna where we discussed the ideas and implementation of the campaign. Each poster had to be translated - even into Austrian German –

Contacts had to be made in each country by the respectively co-operation partners. In Vienna political pressure was needed to get the permission hanging stickers onto the street cars. Our co-operation partner in Brussels had to make arrangements for presenting the campaign in Brussels, i.e. organising two conferences on 7th of December in French and Dutch. Due to political situations we decided that the focus of the campaign will be put on Austria. While Germany had no problems implementing the campaign in Vienna political intervention was needed.

(3) The **participation at conferences** like the international women's conference of Terre de Femmes has been regarded as very important because there is a tremendous lack of knowledge regarding the political and social situation of lesbians in Europe. Furthermore it seems as women issues as well as lobbying are much more established and could be used to transport the situation of lesbians. But a lot of organisations think that fighting for women's rights automatically includes fighting for lesbian rights – which is as a matter of fact not true. So our participation and visibility is necessary to rise consciousness.

Participation is mainly done by project manager but also within the respectively countries by the co-operation partners.

(4) Preparations had to be made to build the homepage in English.

All our actions are accompanied by an intense press work (see attached report).

(5) The external evaluation was taken by the “Gesellschaft für sozialwissenschaftliche Frauenforschung e.V. (GSF e.V.).

(6) Financial controlling and evaluation was done by tax office “U. Habert”.

(7) The internal evaluation was based on two aspects:

- a) improvement of co-operation and national implementation
- b) theoretical background, evaluation of concept and the implementations.

On 25th of November we had a **conference** in Frankfurt/M presenting the work we did past year, discussing hate crime and hate speech and inviting “guests of interest” for the exchange of information. Those guests are state attorneys, police, representatives of family centres, women centres, help lines, victim support organisations and lesbian groups. It is a great success getting the German Max-Planck Institute, a very well known research institution, into this process.

Co-operation partners: Our co-operation partners from Vienna and Berlin will take part at the conference. Our partner from Berlin will present parts of the results of the research done, and our partner from Vienna will present her experience implementing the campaign in Vienna.

3. Results and impacts of the project

(In this part, please answer the following questions : Which **results** were obtained from the activities described above ? How did you **evaluate** the results ? What did you **learn** from that evaluation ? How were the **ultimate beneficiaries** involved in the project and in the evaluation of the results ? What are the **impacts of the results** on beneficiaries and /or other audience ?)

The results of the **research** done on quality and quantity of health care provision (based on a definition of health including not only the absence of illness but mental, economical and social wellbeing) for lesbians with experience of violence show, that neither in Belgium, Austria nor Germany a support system exists which is able to provide adequate support for lesbian women. The results were evaluated by statistical methods. We have learned that it is absolute necessary to build up a horizontal network and to integrate social institutions as well as human right organisations and women's organisations into our project. As an aspect of mainstreaming politics and the politics of diversity it is absolutely necessary to make differences of social minorities visible in order to be able to integrate them into a comprehensive approach of mainstreaming. Therefore a “model of good practise” has to be developed and institutions have to be evaluated due to its standards. The research is published in a German brochure “GUT AUFGEHOBEN?” and will be translated into English in 2003 (“WELL TAKEN CARE OF?”). The brochure will be available as download on internet and as paper for free.

The results of the **PR-campaign** are:

- gained tolerance toward homosexuals is very fragile
- people feel threatened in their used lifestyles by homosexuals, they feel their view on the world questioned, e.g. what and how a family has to be.
- Tolerance stops when it is about children

- The Anti-discrimination department of Vienna got severe threats via telephone, whereas only one threat was uttered at the guest book in Internet. In Frankfurt/M posters had been destroyed.
- Every reaction was regarded as a “good reaction”. Reactions made it possible to find out crucial points of prejudices, e.g. family values and children.

The mentioned campaign is one possible means sensitizing possible perpetrators in aiming at widespread prejudices against lesbian women. It is the very first one in Europe not only targeting at the visibility of lesbians (your neighbour could be one) but on specific prejudices toward lesbians. The campaign is concise and right to the point. The idea was based on a campaign in Great Britain where common prejudices against homosexuals were published in changing the term homosexuals into homophobes. Although this campaign was not regarded to tackle the specific problem of violence against lesbians only this made it possible to develop our campaign.

Moreover, German lesbian support systems like lesbian phone lines and lesbian counselling services have been qualified and informed about our research. General standards quantifying the amount of lesbians with experience of violence and discrimination have been developed. In Germany the project plays a very important part in initiating and “flanking” the German lesbian movement which is focussing on the fight against violence. The steps made definitely had not be done without the guidance of this project.

Furthermore, we are on our way building up **interdisciplinary networks** and **qualifying institutions** so that a more elaborated system is build to provide help and support for lesbians experiencing violence. The campaign aiming at possible perpetrators is rising awareness and thus hopefully increasing an understanding of social conditions of lesbians in western European societies. Our gained data will be published and distributed for free to relevant institutions.

The impact of the results on

a) lesbians

Knowledge, that no interdisciplinary support system is given. Data need to be provided for lobbying long term financial support of lesbian counselling services and to start lesbian specific projects like shelters for battered lesbians. It cannot be overseen, that our project has an great impact on the German, Austrian and Belgian lesbian movements, because most of the collected data are new, they support the idea of lesbian specific research and support systems. But it also has an impact on e.g. women shelter houses who started a new discussion on violence against lesbians. Even in other countries, where we build up networks are “ignited”, the mere existence of the project seems to give hope and new impetus (like in France). The biggest step (compared to the social situation) could be made in Belgium: It was the very first time that lesbian specific aspects was a topic of workshops. One of the attending institution will become our co-operation partner and is already planing a training for other social institutions. Our co-operation partner from Garance asbl is invited to a conference at a University to present the project.

b) Mainstreaming politics

This project defines one part of a politic of diversity which is an important aspect of mainstreaming. In showing differences and similarities of various social groups and taking them into account implementing a European Mainstreaming politics helps to decrease the fear of being made invisible and to makes much more efficient. Due to different social situations of various social minorities it is absolutely important to strengthen them and thus “make them visible” so that they can contribute their knowledge to the politics of mainstreaming.

4. Dissemination and follow-up

(In this part, please answer the following questions : How – and to whom - did you **disseminate** your results ? What are your intentions for **further dissemination** ? What do you think the **follow-up** of your project should be ? What are your **plans to ensure yourself** (part of) this follow-up ? How did you ensure the **visibility of the European Commission** contribution to this project ?)

Our main way to disseminate the results of our project is to publish them on our homepage. But nevertheless brochures had been printed which can be ordered. The brochure will also be translated into English. The posters still can be ordered for free from our organisation so that this idea will be disseminated in Germany, Austria and Belgium.

It is not possible to “close down” this project year. Will still keep the guest book, thus collecting answers from the campaigns in other cities. The institutions ordering posters are contracted to publish the internet

address and that the campaign is financed by the European Union. Reactions on our brochure "WELL TAKEN CARE OF?" can be evaluated earliest in 2002.

Although a lot of fields open up where research could and should be done, we regard it as absolute necessary to focus on lesbian battering relationship next year. There still almost no research does exist (University of Utrecht), but what can be assumed is, that traditional models to explain domestic violence within heterosexual partnerships are not applicable. Furthermore, even within the lesbian (and even more within the gay) community the problem is a huge taboo. Nevertheless it is assumed that the amount of lesbian battering relationships can be compared to the amount of heterosexual battering relationships. This means, that there needs to be a support system for battered lesbians. But the results of the research done in 2001 shows, that there is no support for battered lesbians, although there exists at least in Germany a wide network of women shelter houses. Invisibility of and tabooing of domestic violence in lesbian partnerships is the basic problem. Thus, it is absolutely necessary to sensitizise the lesbian community as well as already existing networks of domestic violence. But at the end models of lesbian shelter houses need to be implemented. Putting our focus on domestic violence provides data for the political implementation of this idea.

Our efforts building up a transnational network including a) experts, b) lesbian NGOs and c) social institutions urgently needs to be intensified.

Education is regarded as one necessity demand to combat violence against lesbians. Based on the idea of mainstreaming it is necessary to sensitize not only institutions which have to deal with lesbians but all who are working in the social, economical and political field. As a matter of fact, we cannot do this. But we can develop training classes for non-lesbian social institutions, in order to increase quality and quantity of support systems for lesbians with experience of violence. We will offer them as a model and a tool for evaluation.

We also will do in 2003 our congress in bring together all data we collected, all networks we implemented, etc.

5. Conclusions

(Please sum up in a brief paragraph what your project has achieved, its impact on beneficiaries and what remains to be done. Please bear in mind that this paragraph will be used as the **summary report** that the Commission plans to circulate largely via the Daphne web-site and other means. Therefore, ensure that it is concise, right to the point, explicit and attractive.)

Violence against lesbians should not be considered as a problem of a minority within a bigger "minority". It is essential for mainstreaming politics to reckonise differences between groups which are general regarded as a homogenous group (homosexuals). But there is a huge lack of knowledge, misunderstandings and even a lot of prejudices. But violence against lesbians concerns all women because it fights essential rights of autonomy and to choose a lifestyle.

Violence against lesbians is a global phenomenon but needs local solutions. Differences given even within a country (urban areas vs. rural areas, influence of the churches, legal conditions, democracy vs. military government etc.) make it difficult to present a global concept. What needs to be provided are models of good practise which can be used as role models for European countries.

Based on research on violence against lesbians it can be assumed that at least more than 20% of lesbians experience physical violence and more than 40% experience sexual violence aiming at their psycho-sexual identity. Quite a lot of lesbians develop avoidance strategies, knowing that an attack can happen all the time. The experience of violence and discrimination can have an impact on the health of lesbians. Health is defined according to the Charta of Ottawa in 1986 not only as the absence of illness but including mental, social and economical wellbeing. In the present year the focus was laid on several aspects and questions:

- (1) how do cope lesbians with their experience and where can they find support?
- (2) the breeding ground of violence are prejudices. What are specific prejudices against lesbians and how can we fight them

(3) enlargement of horizontal and vertical networking, i.e. social institutions and governmental institutions

First, we did a survey addressing family centres, women centres, victim support institutions, police, help lines and women shelter houses and asked them about access for lesbians. The criterions have been a) integration of lesbians into public relation, b) specific knowledge about lesbians and violence and c) attitude toward lesbians. The results are devastating. Some examples: “It is their own problem, because when lesbians cannot cope with their homosexuality, no wonder, their environment cannot either” (police, Germany). Or: “I don’t like your research, maybe because I don’t like lesbians!” (women shelter house, Germany). Or: “We support only real victims of criminal attacks” (victim support centre, Germany). In European Countries there is almost no adequate support system for lesbians with experience of violence. These are “exceptions of the rule” depending on individual efforts. There is no comprehensive concept including lesbian women – no “homo-mainstreaming”. Furthermore, specific Lesbian Counselling Services cannot be found in most European countries. Other possible support systems are usually neither qualified nor interested. This devastating situation puts a new light on the close social environment (peer groups, friends) and the partnership, because they are the only support systems lesbians have. The results of the survey are published in a brochure “GUT AUFGEHOBEN?/WELL TAKEN CARE OF?” and is also available as download at www.lesben-gegen-gewalt.de

Second, fighting violence against lesbians also means fighting its breeding ground, that is fighting prejudices against lesbians. The implemented campaign is addressing a certain type of perpetrator: Male, in his 30s, open minded, financially settled, maybe children, maybe married. Important is, he thinks of himself that he is tolerant and open minded. Thus our campaign has the title “**I don’t mind lesbians, BUT** ... “.

- why do they have to look like men?”
- they just did not find yet the right man.”
- not my daughter!”
- they are not real normal.”
- children need a father.”

The counter-arguments are right to the point and short. They end with “Prejudices hurt. Prejudices are the breeding ground for violence. No BUT, no violence against lesbians.” The aim of the campaign is to make visible specific aspects of violence against lesbians (compared to violence against gay males) and to rise awareness for certain prejudices focussing on lesbians. The slogans were translated into Austrian German, French and Dutch. While the campaign was implemented in Germany and Austria in public spaces (subway stations, underground), in Belgium several workshops were held to inform social institutions as well as the gay/lesbian movement. The posters will be distributed in Belgium via institutions.

Third, **networking** is very important for the project because those view existing lesbian specific counselling services cannot provide the whole service needed and – as mentioned before – they do not exist in most European countries. This means, that other institutions have to get qualified and sensitized. We have been working on three topics: a) transportation of the web site into English; b) initiating and “flanking” meetings of lesbian help lines and lesbian counselling services; c) having a conference for experts presenting our results and discussing aspects of hate crime and hate speech. The conference is also used to evaluate the project by discussing our results with external experts.

The impact of our actions on social institutions are obvious: Being confronted with such a questionnaire caused a lot of trouble. The questionnaire was given from one person to the other, sent to ministries, people called and asked questions. So, even sending the questionnaire was a way of raising awareness. The rate of return is around 30% - which is very high for this kind of research. Having the EU as a backbone it seems as certain institutions answer which usually would not react on a questionnaire from a NGO. Although the results are devastating, they provide necessary information for political debates and demands. Some of the social institutions would like to get training – which we will provide next year.

Main changes:

(1) Co-operation

The co-operation between Brussels, (London), Vienna, Berlin and Frankfurt has been intensified. This has a major impact on our travelling costs: the partners have to meet at least three to four times a year. Furthermore we decided to share responsibility in having now a “junior partner” in Berlin who is getting more involved into the project. So the travels between Frankfurt and Berlin also have to be increased. Those reorganisations are used to re-modify the concept of co-operation in a way of greater share of

responsibilities according to the various capacities of the partners. Brussels and London represent self-help organisations based honorary capacities, whereas Vienna, Berlin and Frankfurt are professional organised. Emphasising the co-operation in sharing more responsibilities builds the solid ground for the implementation of the project ideas/concepts into the respective countries.

(2) Participation at and organisation of conferences

Another very important aspect is that due to multiplicatory effects it is absolutely necessary to implement annual conferences about a) the results of the project and b) to continue interdisciplinary networks. A conference is the best way to bring people/experts together and to make research results etc. available for the public. So, we organised a conference, addressing police and state attorneys. It is important to intensify this co-operation so that those institutions are getting sensitized. One example: The police in Frankfurt/Germany is planning a public relation campaign similar to the London police, addressing gay and lesbians who experienced violence (postcard, flyer, web site, etc.). This is a tremendous success.

But we also noticed that it is very important to take part at interdisciplinary conferences on women issues, human rights and theories about violence to make visible the aspect of violence against lesbians. Most people are not aware or regard it as a minor problem – we are not invited. Thus we need to increase our efforts to get more integrated into the network of exchange of information about conferences.

Annexes

1. List of keywords describing best your project (please use the form attached);
2. Final Accounts;
3. List of materials produced during your project (audio or audio-visual media, publications, brochures, manuals, posters, CD-ROM, web-site,...).

ANNEX 1 : KEYWORDS

The main purposes of the Daphne Programme are to create networks and to encourage the exchange of information and best practice. The Commission has therefore set up a database containing the details of all completed Daphne projects. This database is accessible via the Daphne page on the EC web-site :

(http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/project/daphne/en/index.htm).

The matrix below allows us to categorise your report according to certain pre-set search words. Please complete it carefully.

Mark all the areas of action and types of activity listed below which were covered by your project.

Beneficiaries	Daphne Objectives	Areas
<input type="checkbox"/> Children	<i>Support to the collaboration of organisations</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual violence
<input type="checkbox"/> Young people	X Support to multidisciplinary networks	X Gender violence
X Women	X Exchange of good practices	<input type="checkbox"/> Violence in family
	<input type="checkbox"/> Studies	<input type="checkbox"/> Violence in domestic context
Specific groups	<i>Support to public awareness</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Violence in schools
X Homosexuals	X Information campaign	<input type="checkbox"/> Violence in institutions
<input type="checkbox"/> Migrants	<input type="checkbox"/> Information sources	<input type="checkbox"/> Violence in urban areas
<input type="checkbox"/> Refugee	<input type="checkbox"/> Recognition and reporting	<input type="checkbox"/> Violence in rural areas
<input type="checkbox"/> Asylum seekers		<input type="checkbox"/> Violence in the work place
<input type="checkbox"/> Trafficked persons		<input type="checkbox"/> Trafficking in human beings
<input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic minorities	Specific Objectives	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial sexual exploitation
<input type="checkbox"/> Handicapped	X Prevention of violence	<input type="checkbox"/> Internet
<input type="checkbox"/> Domestic workers	<input type="checkbox"/> Protection from violence	<input type="checkbox"/> Child Pornography
<input type="checkbox"/> People in prostitution	X Treatment of victims	<input type="checkbox"/> Racism
<input type="checkbox"/> Elderly	<input type="checkbox"/> Reintegration of victims	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-harm
<input type="checkbox"/> Prisoners	X Counselling victims	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical punishment
	<input type="checkbox"/> Support to families	<input type="checkbox"/> Female genital mutilation
Targeted Audience	<input type="checkbox"/> Legislative measures	<input type="checkbox"/> Health impacts
<input type="checkbox"/> Violent men	<input type="checkbox"/> Treatment of offenders	
X Perpetrators / offenders	<input type="checkbox"/> Reintegration of offenders	Instruments
X Public Authorities		X Network with NGOs
X General Public		X Multisector network
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical staff		X Awareness-raising
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational staff		X Dissemination of good practice
<input type="checkbox"/> Police staff		X Guidelines / Counselling
<input type="checkbox"/> Judicial staff		<input type="checkbox"/> Models (analysis / development)
<input type="checkbox"/> Media / Journalists		X Training
		X Production of materials
		X Conference / seminar
		<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone / Internet Helpline
		<input type="checkbox"/> Field work