

6) T-SHIRT PRICE

This activity explores the global supply chain and economic inequalities embedded in everyday consumer goods, using the example of a €29.99 T-shirt. By assigning participants distinct stakeholder roles within the production and sale process, the exercise promotes a critical understanding of value distribution, ethical consumerism, and the hidden costs behind affordable fashion. Participants are challenged to consider diverse perspectives, negotiate fairness, and reflect on the broader implications of their purchasing decisions. Through this role-play simulation, participants develop empathy for various stakeholders, gain insights into the complexities of global trade, and critically examine systemic inequities in supply chains. This activity is particularly effective for raising awareness about sustainability, fair labor practices, and consumer responsibility.

Number of participants: 6 - 30

Duration: 15 minutes + open discussion

Facilitator: youth worker, teacher

Materials:

- roles for each participant (printed multiple times, depending on the number of players)
- printed picture of €29.99 T-shirt
- description of the roles for customers

How to play/conduct the activity?

Participants should be divided into groups of 6 (there may be more than one customer in each group). Distribute one set of roles to each group and one copy of the €29.99 T-shirt. Each participant should read their description for themselves. In the group, they should discuss the distribution of the price and then, based on the arguments they have as a person they play, they should each prepare arguments for their role, what share of the price of the T-shirt belongs to them, and why. Then individual stakeholders should share their arguments with everyone, first factory workers, then factory managers, brand representatives, purchasing officers, and salespeople, e.g.: "I'm a worker in a T-shirt factory. I think I should receive... because... «

Are the requirements very different? Can you agree on how to distribute the money fairly? At the end of the discussion, the participants who had the role of the buyer should present their answers. What are their answers? Why did they decide on such an arrangement?

In the end, reveal to the participants how much money an individual stakeholder receives from the €29.99 T-shirt. You can write the answers on the board or reveal only the numbers and have the participants try to guess who gets each share.

- Shop/retailer: €16.33
- Brand: €11.16
- Purchasing officer: €2.00
- Factory manager: €0.26
- Factory worker: €0.24

Conclude the activity with a discussion:

- Did the numbers surprise you?
- Are they very different from your numbers or request?
- What do you think is fair or unfair?
- What can we do as customers?

Roles for the game:

- I'm a factory worker. I make T-shirts. I cut the fabric, sew and iron it, and finally pack the products. I work all day, I only have a short lunch break, I work every day, even on weekends.
- I'm the factory manager. I supervise the workers. I have to pay them salaries every month and cover the costs of running the factory. I have to make sure that the T-shirts are made on time and that they are of good quality.
- I am a brand. I decide what the T-shirts should look like. I pay for the design and advertising of our products. I have to transport my T-shirts from the factory to the shops— it's often a long way across many countries.
- I'm a purchasing officer. I decide where the T-shirt I buy should be made, who makes it, and how fast it should be made. I have to find all the materials to make and pay for them in advance.
- I'm a merchant. I'm selling T-shirts. Before that, I have to buy or rent a store, which must be nicely designed so that customers will feel good in it. I need to hire salespeople. I need to attract customers with advertising.
- I'm a customer. I paid €29.99 for the T-shirt. How much of this money should be given to each of the other roles:
 - factory worker?
 - factory owner?
 - brand?
 - purchasing officer?
 - merchant?

Competences:

- system thinking
- empathy and perspective thinking
- critical thinking
- communication and argumentation
- collaboration and negotiation
- ethical reasoning
- financial and economic literacy
- global citizenship
- responsibility and agency
- reflective thinking