

## **Not so smartphone game instructions for the teacher, Pro Ethical Trade Finland, 2021**

*Not so smartphone* is a boardgame about the responsibility of global trade and business in the lifecycle of electronics. The target group is youth and young adults, from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade of comprehensive school (14-15 years old) to secondary education and higher education.

This instruction will go through what you should do with the students before the game, during the game and after. These tips will support the students in focusing and finding new connections, and support the teacher in connecting the learnt skills and knowledge from the game to teaching goals.

The game takes around an hour and it is most suitable for a 75–90-minute class to be played in small groups. Remember to print out the parts of the game according to the instructions in the game rules!

The game has been developed in 2021-21 by a group of adult volunteers and a global education expert from Pro Ethical Trade Finland, called Eetti, which is an NGO that promotes fair trade, sustainable production and responsible consumerism.

### **Before the game**

Tell the students what the theme and goal of the game are:

Global trade and sustainable development can feel like distant and complicated topics. That is why the theme of the game is something you use every day and is therefore important: smartphones and their production! The game is based on the real production chains of electronics from producer to consumer. The game introduces important questions about the industry:

*Who has made my smartphone and where? What natural resources and labour stages are included in production? What types of issues and solutions connected to working conditions and the environment make production “fair” or “unfair”? How could companies, governments and consumers act more responsibly?*

When playing the game, you will notice how trade connects different areas of the world, natural resources, infrastructure and jobs into a large network. Global trade researchers talk about how we have “hidden social connections” with people around the world and with the environment. We are dependent on other countries and we share the responsibility for both the good and bad effects of production. That is why it is important to inspect the origin of products, consumerism and the responsibility of businesses.

In this game we compete in the role of a company. The goal is to assemble a smartphone as quickly as possible by going to mines and factories on the world map. Winning is impacted by speed, but also by responsibility and karma: 1) you can buy fair or unfair minerals and factories 2) during your turn, you pick a choice card which has a situation connected to responsibility or a knowledge question. The answer defines how many steps you can take and how much karma you will receive or lose 3) the game is also impacted by chance cards, which are lifted on the red spots on the game board. Read the instructions carefully!

## **During the game**

The task of the teacher is to organise and direct the game's process. You can go around the small groups and support the negotiations needed for decision-making and if necessary, you can pause the game for a moment to allow discussion. Playing in the role, dark humour and polarising responsibility choices may create debate or laughter. The cards can contain for instance heroically quick solutions for working conditions or worker exploitation, environmental disasters and greenwashing. With the choice cards, you need to evaluate the consequences of different answers: generally speaking, the principle is that an irresponsible choice gives you more steps, but it gives you bad karma. As the game progresses, the player can realise which answers are "correct" or "wrong" in view of responsibility, and also how to strategize to gain speed and points.

### **A pandemic spreads in one of your Chinese component factories.**

- a) You order all the employees to have a week's quarantine without pay.
- b) You make sure the workplace has proper protective gear and safety protocol in place.
- c) You share a sympathetic post on social media and remind people to wash their hands.

### **While processing rare-earth elements, poisonous chemicals have leaked into a nearby river in Baotou, China.**

- a) No worries! The chemicals will dilute quickly.
- b) You fix the pipe which allows the chemicals to leak.
- c) You fix the pipe and organise a massive river cleaning campaign.

*Examples of the dark humour in the choice cards.*

## **After the game**

It is important to discuss the knowledge learnt from the game and the feelings that arose with the students. In small groups and/or with the whole group you can for instance discuss these types of questions:

- 1) How did you feel about playing the game?
- 2) What types of things or terms did you learn? What did you learn about the responsibility of production?
- 3) What did it feel like to make choices in the role of a company? Was answering easy or difficult?
- 4) How could you promote sustainable consumerism and production at home or at school?

## Connecting the game to teaching goals: transversal competence, global education and the contents of different courses

- From the perspective of the curriculums, the *Not so smartphone* game especially supports **the goals of global education and transversal competencies**, according to which youth should learn the knowledge and values of global citizens and skills for societal impact to build a sustainable future. Compatible with the curriculum for comprehensive school (2014, p. 16), the game “considers conflicts arising from ways of consuming and production in relation to a sustainable future and searches for solutions to fix our way of life.”
- The game is specifically suitable for **courses in geography**, which discuss global trade and (over)consumption, the crust of the Earth and mining, livelihoods and the lifecycles of products, as well as human rights, environmental issues and activism. Learning is also supported through maps, names of places and news topics in different scales.
- This broad game can be of use **in courses for different subjects or in transversal entities in comprehensive schools, secondary education and higher education**. The game also supports contents from biology, history, social studies and ethics, and it can be adapted for instance for education in business and marketing, chemical elements and technology as well as entrepreneurship and sustainable development.
- **The game format** is seen as a motivating, functional method for learning and it supports transversal competencies. At best it can increase variation and fun as well as strengthen social and group skills.

## The themes of the game shortly: global trade, the lifecycle of electronics and corporate responsibility

The simplified production stages and responsibility questions chosen for the *Not so smartphone* game are based on the real electronics industry. Electronics are an interesting product group where the production contains a vast number of different livelihoods from primary production and refinement to services and information work. A simplified example of a production chain could look like this:

- 1) Designing the product, technological solutions and marketing, USA
- 2) Mining for raw materials, Congo, Indonesia and Argentina
- 3) Packaging and transportation to foundries, Switzerland
- 4) Production of components, batteries and other parts, South Korea
- 5) Assembly and testing, Malaysia and China
- 6) Finishing up the products and packaging (the stage with the “Made in” mark), China
- 7) Transportation and sales, EU and Finland
- 8) Transportation and e-waste, Finland and Ghana.

In the electronics industry, the markets are dominated by a small number of large brands and the production and factory work in high technology is dominated by China. Though many of the raw materials and minerals needed for the products are found all over the world, the mining of certain minerals is centralised: for example 60-70% of all cobalt is produced in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Africa.

News headlines also talk about the problematic effects of electronic products’ lifecycles on the environment, human rights, climate and financial development: growing consumerism, environmental poisons from the mining industry, the “outsourcing” of pollution into factories in other countries, the bad working conditions and salaries of mining and factory workers, shortages in

product recycling and repairs, as well as Finland's hopes of becoming a big player in the battery industry. On the other hand, we can also read about ways that citizens can promote better legislation, solutions for a circular economy and responsible consumerism. Luckily the rules for global trade are being strengthened: in addition to rules of the International Labour Organisation, the UN has also agreed to principles directing businesses and human rights in 2011 as well as the sustainable development Agenda 2030 programme in 2015. The European Commission is making a proposition for due diligence legislation for corporate responsibility in 2021.

### **The game development team**

The game has been developed and implemented by volunteers of Pro Ethical Trade Finland with the support of the EU Solidarity Corps 2020-2021.

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